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THE GREAT WAR

BY

M. O. DAVIS

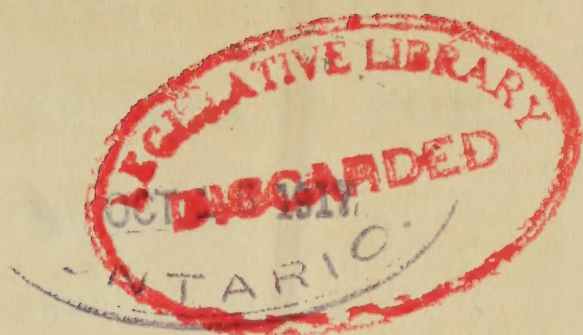
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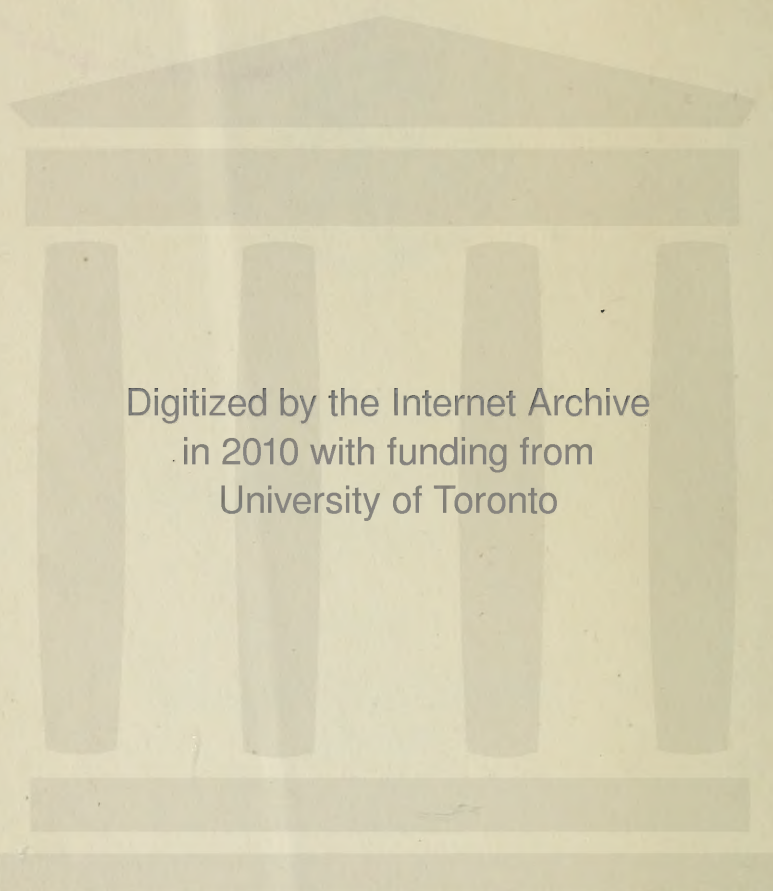


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THE GREAT WAR AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR EUROPE

BY

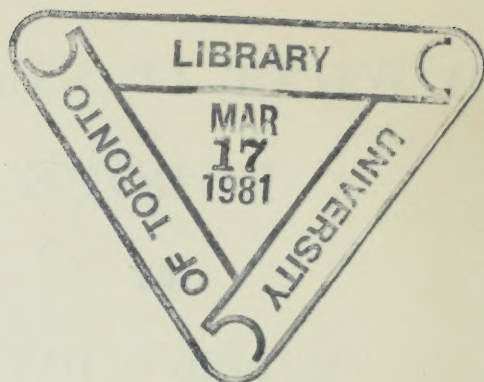
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PREFACE

THIS little book is intended for use in the Upper Standards of Elementary Schools, and the Lower and Middle Forms of Secondary Schools. In writing it, I have found especially useful many of the Oxford Pamphlets and *Why we are at War*, published by the Clarendon Press. I have, with permission, made free use of my brother's pamphlet on Belgium. My thanks are due to Miss Lilley, Head of Birmingham University Training College for Women, Professor Hughes of Birmingham University, both of whom looked over some of my proofs; and also to my brother Mr. H. W. C. Davis, of Balliol College, who read both the MS. and the proofs and made many valuable suggestions. They are in no sense responsible for any errors in this book.

M. O. DAVIS.

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
May 1, 1915.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

Britain has not been at war in Europe for fifty years. The Crimean War. The growth of the Peace spirit. Arbitration treaties. The Hague Conferences	1
---	---

CHAPTER II

The Sarajevo assassination. The month of suspense. The Austrian ultimatum. The work of diplomacy. The successive entrances into the war	14
---	----

CHAPTER III

The assassination a mere pretext. Short history of Serbia, and her struggles. The character of her people, and their spirit	24
---	----

CHAPTER IV

The 'ramshackle empire'. The growth of Austria. Her relations with the Balkan States. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. German influence	33
--	----

CHAPTER V

Russia, the protector of the Slavs. Some account of the Russian people, their national characteristics and aspirations	44
--	----

CONTENTS

v

PAGE

CHAPTER VI

Germany : the wars of 1866 and 1870. The domination of Prussia. Her dream of a world-empire. The growth of army and navy. Germany's recent provocations to war. No friends but Austria and Turkey	57
---	----

CHAPTER VII

France. Results of 1870. Alliance with Russia. Triple Entente	70
---	----

CHAPTER VIII

Belgium. The meaning of 'perpetual neutrality'. Reasons for the arrangement of 1839. The guarantees	81
---	----

CHAPTER IX

Great Britain. Her duty to Belgium and France. The danger to our Empire of German victory. The loyalty of the Colonies and India . . .	90
--	----

CHAPTER X

Results which may be expected after the war .	100
GLOSSARY	109

CHIEF DATES

- 1839. Independence and Neutrality of Belgium guaranteed by Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia.
- 1854-6. Crimean War.
Treaty of Paris.
- 1870. Independence and Neutrality of Belgium again guaranteed by Germany and France.
- 1870-1. Franco-Prussian War.
- 1871. Arbitration Treaty of Washington.
- 1878. Treaty of Berlin.
Proclamation of Serbian Independence.
- 1883. Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria, and Italy.
- 1890. Fall of Bismarck.
- 1896. Definite Alliance between Russia and France.
- 1899. First Peace Conference at The Hague.
- 1904. Dogger Bank incident.
'Pig war' between Austria and Serbia.
- 1905. Visit of German Emperor to Tangier.
Algeçiras Conference.
- 1907. Second Peace Conference at The Hague.
- 1908. Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria.
- 1909. Annexation recognized by Serbia.
- 1911-12. Balkan League.
- 1912. Treaty of Bucharest.
- 1913. Austria secretly informs Germany and Italy that she meditates an attack on Serbia.

1914. June 28. Murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand.
- July 23. Austria-Hungary sends Note to Serbia.
1914. July 25. Austria-Hungary declares answer unsatisfactory.
- July 28. Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.
- July 31. General Russian mobilization.
- Aug. 1. Germany declares war on Russia and France.
- Aug. 2. Germans invade Luxemburg (a neutral State).
British fleet mobilized.
- Aug. 3. German ultimatum to Belgium.
- Aug. 4. Germans enter Belgium.
Great Britain sends ultimatum to Germany, because of this violation of Belgian neutrality.
- Aug. 12. Great Britain declares war on Austria-Hungary.
- Aug. 23. Japan joins the Allies.
- Nov. 5. Turkey declares herself on the side of Germany.

England, in this great fight to which you go
Because, where Honour calls you, go you must,
Be glad, whatever comes, at least to know
 You have your quarrel just.

OWEN SEAMAN.

THE GREAT WAR : AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR EUROPE

CHAPTER I

THE tales of the past often make us think that the present is humdrum and dull. Perhaps before the month of August 1914, when we were reading in history books about the Norman Conquest, the Crusades, the Hundred Years' War, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, or the heroes who fought under Wellington, we may have said to ourselves 'Those were great days ; it must have been good to live in them ; would it not have been fine to go forth on a Crusade in armour, or to have cruised up the Channel with Drake after his game of bowls ? ' Perhaps we went on to complain that history books grow duller, more business-like, and less romantic the nearer they get to the history of our own times.

Since the outbreak of this Great War, however, we have realized that we live in stirring times, that every day history is being made which will be remembered as long as the memories of mankind last, because of the issues for which we and our enemies are fighting. Whatever the result of the war may be (though we ourselves are convinced

that it can end only in the victory of the Allies), these months will be landmarks in the history of the world. It is a fine thing to be living and taking a part in these great times. In the days to come the children and grandchildren of the boys and girls who were at school in 1915 will eagerly listen to all the stories that can be remembered of these years. Perhaps they will say 'And what did you do, grandfather? Did you help too?'

There will indeed be much to tell. Every day we hear and read of deeds of bravery which make the blood tingle in our veins. Every day we see fresh signs of war about us. Villages that a short time ago were only sleepy corners of the earth have suddenly become lively little towns, with rows of shops, and picture-houses, for soldiers—Regulars of Kitchener's new army, Territorials, or Colonial troops—are there in camp or billets. In the cities we hear bands and see the long columns of recruits swinging down the middle of the streets. At the sea-side the cliffs and the shore are grooved with trenches; aeroplanes are overhead, and big guns in the background. It is all a splendid and a stirring sight, which we shall talk of all our lives.

But this is the brightest side of the war. The other side of the picture is very dark indeed, and yet not so dark in this island home of ours as on the continent of Europe. Here we know of sad leave-takings; and we get news of friends who will

never come back again from France ; we see Belgian refugees who have lost everything except their lives, and long train-loads of wounded soldiers ; or we meet brave men who have lost a limb in the trenches. We hear shameful tales of cruel deeds done by the enemy in villages and towns across the Channel. Some of us have felt, all of us have heard about, the pinch of war-time in and near our homes ; how some are cold and hungry, and many are obliged to 'go short' because in some places trade is bad and prices are high. And lastly we hear of the Germans raiding our east coast towns, and of women and children who have been their victims ; we see that all the lights are lowered in our streets at night, and we hear talk of German aeroplanes and Zeppelins. Even we in this country have to realize that war means a good deal more than the record of deeds of heroism.

But, after all, people who come back from the continent of Europe say that we in the British Isles do not realize one-tenth of the horrors of war. Cut off as we are by the sea from the mainland of Europe, we are living to-day in comparative security, owing to the strength of our Navy ; and we have for the same reason had practically no experience of fighting in our own country for over three hundred years. The last time there was any serious trouble was in the Jacobite rising of 1745, which ended in the defeat of Prince Charlie at

Culloden. We can say with truth that there has been no serious invasion of the country since the time of King John of evil memory. No wonder, then, that our imagination is a little dull, and that the pictures in our minds of ruined villages and persecuted inhabitants are not very clear. It is true that we have had many wars upon our hands during these centuries. It is hardly possible to glance at any page of our history without finding reference to fighting on land or sea, now in Europe, now in remoter parts of the globe. It is true, too, that the memory of the South African War is still alive in this country; but the fact remains that a war that is close at hand makes a greater impression on a nation than one which is fought at a great distance.

Our statesmen have always looked upon a European war as one of the greatest evils which could befall the world at large. Not only is Europe densely populated, but it is recognized by many of the peoples of the globe as the chief buttress and source of civilization. If Europeans resort to the primitive method of settling their disputes by force, there is small hope of securing any general recognition of the idea that reason must decide quarrels, and not brute strength.

It is now over fifty years since the British took part in a war in Europe, the Crimean War (1854-6). Then we were fighting in alliance with the French

and the Turks against Russia. There was much division in Great Britain before we entered into the war. Some people believed that the Tsar was really doing right in punishing the Turks ; others, like Lord Palmerston, believed that the Turks would reform their empire, if they were only given another chance. Time has proved that Lord Palmerston was wrong ; and to-day the Turks are only getting the punishment which they deserved fifty years ago. The question whether we should fight or no was all the more difficult because it was commonly supposed that the cause of the war was the ambition of the Tsar of Russia, Nicholas I, who wished to conquer the Turkish dominions in order to secure a base for his fleet in the Mediterranean. The way he set to work gave some support to this opinion. First of all, he tried to persuade Great Britain to seize the Turkish possessions, and divide them up with him. Turkey was, he saw, ‘ the sick man of Europe ’, and it would be as well to make all arrangements for the disposal of the sick man’s property before his death. When Great Britain refused to be a party to this plan, the Tsar raised a quarrel with the Sultan by demanding to be made protector of the Greek Christians in Turkey, on the plea that they were ill used. Turkey refused to let the Tsar interfere in her domestic affairs, and war broke out. Napoleon III, the Emperor of the French, then persuaded Great Britain to join in the

struggle in defence of the graceless Turk. Napoleon took this line because he was becoming unpopular in France, and he thought that he could recover popularity only by a victorious war. Accordingly, British and French troops went to Varna, on the west coast of the Black Sea, with the intention of turning the Tsar out of Bulgaria, which he had invaded. On the arrival of the Allies at Varna, however, they found this task had already been performed by the Turks. At this point the Allies might very well have desisted; but jealousy of Russia drove them forward. The war developed into an aggressive war, and preparations were made for an attack on Sebastopol, the great Russian port and arsenal, in the Crimean peninsula. The hardships endured by the British and French troops were exceedingly severe. The expedition was badly equipped, and the officers were often incapable; but in spite of these drawbacks great glory was won by the indomitable bravery of the Allies in the battle of the Alma, the charge of Balaclava, and the battle of Inkerman. Finally siege was laid to Sebastopol, which held out for nearly a year, from October 1854 until September 1855. The sufferings of the soldiers during these months were very great: the weather was severe, the food was bad, and the army was attacked by cholera. At last, in 1854, Miss Florence Nightingale was sent out by the Government with a band of nurses to look after the soldiers. It is interesting

to remember that Miss Nightingale lived to the age of ninety-one, and died on August 15, 1910. The chief mourner at her funeral was the last survivor of the soldiers she had nursed. This fact seems to bring the Crimean War very close to our own day. The war was at last brought to an end, in 1856, by the Treaty of Paris. Turkey was maintained as an independent Power; and the Black Sea was declared neutral, which meant that neither Russia nor any Power might keep ships of war on it. Turkey has since shown herself utterly unworthy of the sacrifices France and England made to preserve her integrity. France lost 95,000 men, England 20,000, not counting those who were discharged on account of wounds, or who died from disease. And worse than all this, no fewer than six wars subsequently broke out in Europe, the causes of which may be traced to the Crimean War. Moreover, none of the important clauses of the Treaty of Paris were maintained for much longer than twenty years.

This war, then, certainly brought home to Great Britain the horrors of war; and from this and from other causes there has been springing up in Great Britain, and other countries of the civilized world, a feeling that, after all, warfare is at the best a barbarous method of settling disputes. Civilization has been gradually trying to put a ban upon the use of force to decide personal quarrels. We smile indulgently at stories of mediaeval knights who

were allowed, by the law of the land, to fight out their quarrels with sword and spear in the 'ordeal by battle'. We know now that it is not always the man with the toughest muscles and the keenest eye who is in the right, and that the weakest must not always 'go to the wall'. If this be the case with private disputes, why, it has been asked, should force always enter into the disputes of nations?

It is mainly for these reasons that a desire has been growing up throughout the civilized world to make use of *arbitration* instead of armed force. Arbitration means an arrangement for taking and abiding by the judgement of umpires in some disputed matter; thus in the last few years we have heard a great deal about arbitration between disputants in strikes of labour. An *international arbitration* is defined as a proceeding in which two nations refer their differences to one or more selected persons, who, after affording each party an opportunity of being heard, pronounce judgement on the matter at issue.

There is, however, one important difference to bear in mind between an ordinary arbitration and an international arbitration. Any ordinary arbitration can be enforced by a decree in the law courts; in other words, both parties to the quarrel can make a solemn legal compact to abide by the sentence of the arbitrator; and if they do not they will incur punishment by the arm of the law, i.e. they may be

fined or sent to prison. But it is clear that this cannot be done in the case of international arbitration. No success can wait upon this, unless the parties who made the agreement honourably abide by their promises, and by the consequences of the arbitration. If the countries which have sworn to abide by their word, refuse to do so, war is the only possible alternative. This resolve to abide by a compact is what is meant by the 'good faith of nations'.

Within recent years there have been many quarrels between nations which have been decided by arbitration. One of the most famous examples is that of the case of the *Alabama*. The *Alabama* was a small ship which was owned by the Southern or Confederate States during the Civil War in America, which broke out in 1861. The *Alabama* was not a warship, but she was fitted out with guns for the purpose of attacking merchant vessels. The trouble with Great Britain was this. The *Alabama* was built in a British port, at Birkenhead, and though her destination was kept a secret, it was strongly suspected. The Ambassador of the United States protested to the British Government that the ship was intended for purposes of war, and an inquiry was ordered. But while the inquiry was proceeding the *Alabama* slipped out of port, picked up ammunition and men from other ships, and then began her dangerous career. She did far

more damage to the mercantile ships of the United States than ever the *Emden* did to ours in this war. She destroyed no fewer than sixty-five vessels, and never once put into a Confederate port. This naturally caused great irritation between Great Britain and the United States. Finally, by a Treaty made at Washington (1871) it was decided that the quarrel should be settled by arbitration. In 1871 a court was appointed, consisting of representatives of Great Britain and the United States, and of three other members appointed by the King of Italy, the President of the Swiss Confederation, and the Emperor of Brazil. In the end the court ruled that Great Britain should pay damages to the extent of over three million pounds sterling. Had it not been for this arbitration we should have undoubtedly gone to war with the United States.

In more recent times we have seen a number of arbitration treaties—that is, agreements between civilized countries to refer future quarrels to courts of arbitration. Great Britain has referred over fifty cases to arbitration during the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth.

In 1899 the friends of peace in all nations thought that a great step had been taken towards the future peace of the world. In that year a Convention, or agreement, was drawn up at The Hague (one of the chief towns of Holland) by representatives of the nations. They met together in

a Peace Conference on the suggestion of the Tsar, Nicholas II ; and Holland was doubtless chosen as the meeting-place because jealousies would have been aroused if the honour of entertaining the Congress had been given to one of the greater nations. The Hague Convention enacted that a court should be set up at The Hague to hear and decide international disputes, and the procedure and rules for the court were decided. Since that meeting a Palace of Peace has been built as a court-house for these cases.

That this court was of practical use was shown in 1904, when the famous Dogger Bank dispute arose. In that year the Russians were at war with the Japanese. As the Russian fleet was making its way from the Baltic to the English Channel in order to reach the Pacific, it came upon the Hull fishing fleet. The Russians, mistaking the fishing vessels for torpedo boats, fired upon them, happily doing little damage. This incident might have seriously disturbed the peace of Europe. However, the case was referred to a Commission appointed by The Hague court ; and compensation and an apology were given to Great Britain.

In 1907 a second Peace Conference was held at The Hague ; this was summoned by the Queen of Holland. It made rules which were to supersede the rules of 1899. It was intended to hold a third Peace Conference in 1915.

Yet, when men at last seemed to be realizing that

it was their imperative duty to settle disputes by reason, the faculty which alone distinguishes them from the brutes, when many were beginning to hope that a Republic of Nations, or a Federation of the World was coming within the range of possibility, all their work seemed suddenly shattered to fragments. In the twinkling of an eye almost the whole of Europe became plunged in the greatest war of all history.

Why did people like Sir Edward Grey, who had laboured for peace with an untiring energy, set their teeth, and say without hesitation that Great Britain must fight till Germany was humbled to the dust? Why did the Colonies rally to our aid without a moment's hesitation, and why did India make our cause her own? All these people knew what the loss of life, the loss of wealth, would mean. They knew that many works for the betterment of the human race would have to be laid aside, that agriculture, commerce, and science would suffer; that our best men would have to give the work of their brains and their bodies to the task of destruction; that social reform would be grievously delayed. Yet all, to a man, were for war. It was because they knew well that there are things in this world which are worse than war. Had the Allies refused to fight, the Germans would not have been contented until they had drawn the whole world under their system. They would have forced

their doctrine of 'might is right' upon the whole family of mankind. The weak, the simple, and the ignorant would become the prey of the man who was 'strong in the arm'—and this is the reason why every man, woman, and child in Great Britain must 'do their bit', if it is only by knitting socks or being a Boy Scout, to help bring this war—the fiercest war there has ever been—to a speedy conclusion.

CHAPTER II

THE crime which was the pretext of the present Great War took place in the Balkan Peninsula. This cannot have come as a surprise to anybody. During the last fifty years, if any thinking man or woman had been asked to prophesy where, in the case of a European war, trouble would first begin, it is more than likely he or she would have answered : ‘ In the Balkans ’. For many years past there have been wars and rumours of wars in those parts.

To account for this we must remember two things. First, that the Balkan Peninsula is a very desirable part of the globe. Though mountainous, it is very fertile, and there are some exceedingly good harbours in it, such as Cattaro, Salonica, Durazzo, Antivari. The Greeks of old became skilled seamen because they had these fine harbours ; and any nation which is in possession of them has great opportunities for trading in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus control of the Balkan Peninsula is likely to be a temptation to an ambitious and unscrupulous Power.

The second thing to remember is that the small nations of the Balkans—Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Roumania, and Turkey—are proud and independent, and also very quarrelsome.

The cause of the present great conflagration in

Europe was the murder of the Heir to the Austrian Empire and the Hungarian Kingdom—the Dual Monarchy as it is called. The Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the nephew of the old Emperor Francis Joseph, was paying a visit of state with his wife to Serajevo, the chief town of the Austrian province of Bosnia. They entered the town on the morning of Sunday, June 28, 1914, and inspected the troops. Afterwards, whilst they were on their way to the Town Hall in a motor-car, a bomb was thrown at them. It missed its aim, striking instead an aide-de-camp of the Archduke, who was following in another car. It also did some injury to people in the crowd. The Archduke, however, went on to the Town Hall, where the Mayor, in complete ignorance of what had occurred, was waiting to greet him; and, after an angry complaint about the reception he had received, he entered the Town Hall.

When he and his wife left the building, a second attempt was made on their lives, and this time it succeeded. Three shots were fired at them by a youth, and both the Archduke and his wife were killed. The deed was without doubt a dastardly one. Shortly afterwards both the criminals were seized. They were a printer aged twenty, and a student at one of the schools of Bosnia.

All Europe was soon ringing with the crime. As was natural, the Austrians bitterly resented the assassination of the Heir to their throne, though

there was a powerful party at court which disliked him heartily. When it was shortly afterwards rumoured that the criminals were of Serbian origin, the affair began to look extremely serious.

There were several other facts which made the situation more complicated than it might appear at first sight.

Bosnia and Herzegovina are two provinces which were taken from the Turks in 1878 by Russia, and which were 'administered' by the Austro-Hungarian Government until 1909. In that year Austria annexed them, although several of the Great Powers of Europe protested. The people who live in these two districts are mainly of Slav origin; and, although they were becoming wealthy under the rule of the Dual Monarchy, they would have preferred to be less prosperous and to keep their liberty. They detested the government of Austria, and many of them desired to be united with the Serbs, who are of the same race.

The Serbs were equally anxious for such a union. They have never forgotten that Bosnia was a Serbian province long ago, before it fell into the hands of the Turks; and they thought that when the Turks were turned out of Bosnia, it should have been made over to Serbia and not appropriated by the Austrians.

Shortly after the murder of the Archduke, the Austrian Government ordered an inquiry to be

made, and in about ten days' time the results were laid before the Emperor. Nobody knew what was going to happen, except the German Government, which, as has been proved amply since, was in the confidence of the Austrian Government. Suddenly, on July 23, the Austrian Government sent to Serbia an extraordinary document, which was both rude and peremptory. This Note stated that the murder of the Archduke had been plotted in Serbia, that it was part of a vast scheme for overthrowing Austrian government in Bosnia, and that Austria had proofs of these facts. These proofs, it may be added, have never been published; and even if they existed, the Austrians admitted that they had been collected by a known enemy of the Slavs, and a man who had already been proved to be responsible for forgery in his Government office in connexion with a previous case against the Slavs.

On the strength of these assertions, a full apology was required from Serbia; furthermore, it was demanded that she should show no more sympathy with the Serbs of Bosnia: that she should control the comments of her newspapers: that she should forbid public meetings which criticized Austrian policy: that she should dismiss such officers from the army as the Austrian Government chose to name. She was also asked to allow delegates of Austria-Hungary to help her police in collecting evidence against the men who were suspected of

being parties to the plot; and she was asked to allow Austrians to help suppress the alleged anti-Austrian movement in the country. To add to the insult, Serbia was given exactly forty-eight hours in which to answer these demands. No wonder the civilized world was amazed at the insolence of the Austrians, who, acting on evidence collected by a notoriously dishonest man (and even that evidence not produced), demanded of a country that she should give up her right to be an independent State.

It looked at that time as if Austria were acting from other motives besides just resentment at a foul deed. This suspicion has been recently confirmed. We now know that Austria had informed Germany and Italy, in 1913, a year before the murder took place, that she was contemplating an attack on Serbia.

Thus by the action of Austria a very dangerous situation was created. As the case stood at that moment, it was not likely that Great Britain or France would make war with Austria about Serbia. They might be disgusted with such high-handed behaviour, but that was all.

There were, however, other more serious elements in the situation. Russia looks upon herself as the protector of the Slav nations, as her population is largely composed of Slavs; so Russia might at any moment be drawn into the controversy.

Now Austria was joined in the Triple Alliance

with Germany and Italy. She was known not to be a strong Power, and it was unlikely that she would provoke a war with Russia, unless she was sure of the support of Germany, the chief partner in the Triple Alliance. The Great Powers of Europe, therefore, tried to induce Germany to use her influence for peace.

At first Germany maintained the attitude that the quarrel was a matter between Austria and Serbia alone ; that there was no need to fear interference on the part of Russia ; that Austria was obliged to treat Serbia thus, otherwise Serbia would take away Austria's southern provinces and join them to the kingdom of Serbia. But it became clear from the outset that Russia was not going to leave Serbia to her fate. The Russian Government remonstrated with Austria both about the peremptory nature of the demand and the short time which was granted for an answer. At the same time Russia was perfectly willing to let the claims of Austria be heard and settled by the judgement of an international court of arbitration.

Sir Edward Grey also suggested that the question should be discussed in a conference between representatives of France, Italy, Germany, and Great Britain. Russia too was perfectly willing that Serbia's case should be treated thus ; but all overtures of this nature were swept on one side by Germany.

On the same day when this suggestion was made Serbia replied to the Austrian Note, offering to grant all the Austrian demands save two, and to leave one of these open to arbitration. The Austrian Government said that the Serbian answer was unsatisfactory, and refused to let either England or Russia arrange a compromise.

On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

The Kaiser now did what he could to 'localize' the struggle—that is, he sent three telegrams to the Tsar praying him, in the interests of Europe, to stand aside and let the Austrians give the Serbians 'their well-deserved punishment' for the crime they had committed. This was all very well, but the Tsar refused to take this attitude before the crime was proved against the Serbian Government. Therefore Russia, in order to show the Austrians that she meant what she said, mobilized her forces in those Russian provinces which are near Austrian territory, and not close to German borders. The Tsar did not wish to provoke a war with Germany. Austria paid no heed to these threats, but proceeded with the bombardment of Belgrade, the Serbian capital.

Meanwhile Germany was secretly making all the preparations she could for war. The Russians having heard of this, on July 31 a general mobilization of the Russian Army was ordered. On the

same day the German Government sent a telegram to Russia ordering her to cease mobilization within twelve hours ; another ultimatum was presented to France, requiring her to declare what steps she would take should war be declared upon Russia. These ultimatums were treated by the French and the Russians as declarations of war ; and on the following day, August 1, orders were issued for the general mobilization of the French Army and the German Army.

Thus Germany, Austria, Serbia, and Russia and France had now entered the war.

Meanwhile, Germany had been making a bid for the neutrality of Great Britain. Germany believed that we should be unwilling to join in the struggle owing to the Home Rule controversy which was then raging in Parliament and in Ulster. Two suggestions of an insidious character were laid before us : first, that we should remain neutral if the Germans undertook to seize no French territory in Europe, but only French colonies. The second proposal was that, as a price for our neutrality, Germany should respect the neutrality of Belgium ; it may here be remarked that Germany was already bound by treaty to do this.

The next day, July 31, Sir Edward Grey asked France and Germany to respect the neutrality of Belgium ; to this request France gave a satisfactory answer, but Germany evaded the question. On

August 4, the King of the Belgians—Germany having demanded a passage through Belgium—made an appeal to King George for intervention ; the British Ambassador at Berlin, Sir E. Goschen, was instructed by Sir Edward Grey to protest. He himself has given a vivid account of what ensued :

“ I called upon the Secretary of State . . . and inquired . . . whether the Imperial Government would refrain from violating Belgian neutrality. Herr von Jagow [the German Secretary of State] at once replied that he was sorry to say that his answer must be ‘ No ’, as, in consequence of the German troops having crossed the frontier that morning, Belgian neutrality had already been violated. Herr von Jagow again went into the reasons why the Imperial Government had been obliged to take this step, namely, that they had to advance into France by the quickest and easiest way, so as to be able to get well ahead with their operations, and endeavour to strike some decisive blow as early as possible.”

Great Britain demanded that an assurance should be given at twelve o'clock that night (August 4) that Germany would proceed no further with their violation of the Belgian frontier and stop their advance. Sir Edward Goschen described his interview with the Chancellor.

“ I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began an harangue, which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was

terrible to a degree; just for a word 'Neutrality'—a word which in war-time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her."

Sir Edward Goschen answered :

"It was a matter of life and death for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgian neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact had to be kept, or what confidence could any one have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future?"

As the required assurance was not given by Germany, war was declared by Great Britain. On August 23, Japan threw in her lot with the Allies, because Germany refused to give up the port of Kiao-Chau, which she had occupied in China. Montenegro joined Serbia; and Turkey ranged herself with Germany on November 5. The countries engaged in the war by that month were, on the one side, Germany, Austria, and Turkey, on the other Russia and France, Great Britain and her Dominions, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, and Japan. It should be remembered that Italy declared herself neutral on August 3, because the other members of the Triple Alliance were engaged in an offensive and not a defensive war, and therefore she did not consider herself bound to fight on their side.

CHAPTER III

It is clear that the plan of exacting vengeance for the crime of Serajevo was merely the pretext which Austria invented for picking a quarrel with the Serbian nation. Not only has it been proved that, as early as 1913, Austria was meditating an attack on Serbia, but the whole course of recent history shows that Austria has been haunted with the fear that Serbia would become the centre of a vast Slav coalition on her southern borders, and would thus prevent her from extending her power to the coast of the Aegæan.

The Slavs are the most numerous race in Europe. A glance at the map shows that a large part of Eastern and Southern Europe is occupied by peoples of this race. Most of the Russians in Europe, and many in Siberia, the Poles, the Bohemians, the people of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro are Slavs, and the Bulgarians are akin to them in many respects. Faced with the danger of a coalition between the Balkan Slavs, Austria has, in recent years, made it a main object of her foreign policy to get a foothold on the Aegæan, if possible at the port of Salonica, before it was too late. This policy has been pursued steadily ever

since Austria was forced to relinquish her hold on Northern Italy.

To this policy of expansion Serbia, by her position and influence, has been a serious obstacle; and Austria's policy towards Serbia has been that of the dog in the manger. Not having been able to reach Salonica, Austria has taken every precaution to prevent Serbia getting control of any coast line; and if there has not been fighting between the two countries before this war, there has at any rate been a constant tug-of-war.

Serbia is much the smaller of the two, but the story of the late Balkan War, and her part in this present war, show us that she is a country which it is difficult to terrify. If we needed further proofs to convince us of the ingrained bravery of her people, we need only glance at her history. The story of that country is a record of severe fighting, generally against odds; it shows both an unquenchable national spirit and a determination to struggle for freedom. Serbia is not a nation which would ever be content to dangle in the train of a great neighbour. In the early Dark Ages, we find the Serbian tribes fighting one another for mastery. By the ninth century they had become Christian, and for a time they were vassals of the Eastern Emperor at Byzantium or Constantinople; and so to this day the majority of the Serbians belong to the Eastern or Orthodox Greek Church.

In the eleventh century, however, the Serbians broke away from the yoke of the Eastern Empire, and for a time they lived as an independent nation. But in the fourteenth century misfortune came upon them. They were defeated by the Turks at the battle of Kossovo (1389), a disaster which is still held in remembrance in the poetry and legends of Serbia. This defeat they think of as the great tragedy of their nation. And so indeed it was; for down to the nineteenth century, first as a tributary state, and then as a province of Turkey, the Serbian nation dragged out a maimed existence. Nevertheless two national aims were always kept in sight during these dark centuries—the determination to get rid of Turkish rule, and the hope of becoming the centre of a Slav dominion in Southern Europe.

The first aim was achieved in the nineteenth century, chiefly through the help of Russia, always the protector of the weaker Slav peoples. By the *Treaty of Berlin* in 1878, which brought to a close a war between Russia and Turkey, Serbia was given its independence. A few years later, the ruler of Serbia took the title of king.

Much was gained by the Treaty of Berlin, but it dealt a heavy blow to Serbia's ambitions. For Russia, in order to gain the neutrality of Austria, allowed her, as we saw in the previous chapter, to occupy and administer Bosnia and Herzegovina,

two provinces which Serbia had hoped in time to attract to her side as members of the Slav coalition.

This blow to her ambitions made Serbia turn her back for a while on Russia, her former friend and protector ; in other words, she sulked against Russia. The final blow to her hopes and aspirations in this direction came when Austria, in 1909, completely unmindful of her promises of 1878, *annexed* Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Great Powers protested at this breach of faith, and Russia, weakened though she was by the war with Japan, ranged herself on the side of Serbia. Then it was that the German Emperor announced, that should Austria's deed be challenged, Germany would step forth in 'shining armour' in her defence. With Austria thus reinforced, Russia was not in the position to make good her promise of protection. But this threatening attitude of Germany in 1909 has not been forgotten or forgiven by the Slav countries.

To add to her difficulties in connexion with foreign policy, Serbia has had troubles at home. Circumstances and character both made her first king thoroughly unpopular. He was hampered by the necessity of raising money to fulfil the obligations he had incurred in the Treaty of Berlin ; and his enemies made much of his quarrels with his wife. Then, too, he waged an unsuccessful war with Bulgaria in 1882. Finally, in 1889, he abdicated in favour of his son, Alexander, a boy of

thirteen. The reign of Alexander only made things worse. He quarrelled with his chief subjects about his marriage, which was, to say the least of it, imprudent. The new Queen had been a lady-in-waiting of his mother and had not a very good reputation. Moreover, Alexander persisted in the policy of friendliness to Austria. In 1903 the crash came, as might have been foreseen. Alexander and his wife were brutally murdered by their enemies. This deed sent a thrill throughout Europe ; most of the Great Powers protested, and it was not until 1906 that Great Britain resumed diplomatic relations with Serbia.

King Peter Kara-george-vich (the grandson of Kara-george, or 'the Black George' a famous patriot of the early nineteenth century) succeeded Alexander. He was no friend of the Austrian Government, and he determined to rule Serbia as a constitutional monarch. He is the present King of Serbia.

All this time Austria had been pursuing a policy of strangling Serbia's foreign trade. Serbia, as we have seen, has no outlet to the sea for her commerce. She is hemmed in on the north by Austria, on the south by parts of the Turkish Empire. If Serbia meant to break away from dependence on Austria's good will, it was necessary that she should find other markets for her trade. Before the Balkan War, in 1904, a convention was

made between Serbia and Bulgaria for the exportation of Serbia's agricultural produce by way of Bulgarian ports. To punish her for this sign of enterprise Austria raised her tariffs against Serbia; this blow to trade meant in the long run financial ruin to Serbia. This war of tariffs was known as the 'Pig War' in Austria, because pigs are among the chief exports of the Serbians.

Meanwhile, other events were leading to the Balkan War, in which Serbia took a prominent share. The Balkan League, of Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece, was formed in 1911-12, Roumania alone of the Balkan States standing outside, and professing friendship to Austria. This League was pledged to attack the Turkish Empire, and its formation was a great blow to Austria, who would have preferred the Slav States to quarrel continuously. When by the end of 1912 Turkey had been defeated, it meant the downfall of all Austria's aspirations for ascendancy in the Peninsula. For all the chief ports, such as Scutari, Durazzo, and Salonica, were in the hands of the League.

Austria therefore set to work to make the Allies quarrel about their spoils of victory. She rose up, for her own selfish ends, as a champion of the principle of nationality. Albania, she said, must be made into an independent State, instead of becoming the property of Serbia. This meant that

the Serbs could not have Durazzo, the desired seaport. Compensation, said Austria, must be sought eastward. As a result Serbia began quarrelling with Bulgaria, which was of course backed up by Austria. It looked as if Austria was making headway with her plans, when Roumania, contrary to all Austrian predictions, joined with Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro. At the Treaty of Bucharest, which ended the war, it was Bulgaria, the protégé of Austria, which was humbled.

All these facts explain the unfriendly attitude of Austria to Serbia, and the crisis of 1914.

Before leaving this subject we must notice that the geography of Serbia has done much to determine her history. The country has been called a tangled mass of mountains, through which runs one main artery, the valley of the River Morava, a tributary of the Danube. This valley is extremely fertile, and it forms a pathway to Salonica. Branching off from this valley of the Morava is the valley of the River Nish, down which runs the railway and the road to Constantinople. These good natural routes through mountainous country are tantalizing to a rival nation covetous of means to make its way to the sea.

Then again, as we have seen, Serbia is surrounded on all sides by other nations. Thus she is dependent for her commercial prosperity or the reverse on the good will or ill will of her neighbours.

It is always well to remember, too, that Serbia is largely a country of farmers, all cultivating their own little estates as peasant proprietors. Agriculture is not far advanced, but pig-feeding is the most important industry. The Serbian pig has been described 'as a great character': he is cared for, waited on and tended. Unlike our pig, he is a great woolly beast with a curly back.

The middle-class population is small in number and in consequence the cities of Serbia are of no considerable size. As for the class of the nobility, it has literally been exterminated by the Turks in the wars of the past. Yet Serbia is described as a land of great possibilities, were there some capital to be spent upon it and were education only more widely spread. Travellers are struck with its rich breezy uplands, its warm, well-watered valleys. Corn, vines, tobacco, green crops, and every variety of fruit grow luxuriantly even with the present most primitive methods of cultivation. But the land is crippled by poverty, the necessity of keeping up a standing army, and the wretched state of education in the country. In 1910, only 17 per cent. of the population could read and write.

But the national spirit of this little people is very fine, as the present war has shown. If the story of Belgium teaches us, as it has been rightly said, that the spirit of heroes may still live in the surroundings of modern commerce, the story of Serbia shows

us that simple farmer folk may also keep the flame of heroism alive. For the Serbian nation is a simple nation. The descriptions that travellers give us of their gay costumes, their market-places, their country dances, and their reverence for old religious ceremonies, make us think that we are reading about people of the Middle Ages.

It used to be said that the Serbs are lazy ; nowadays no one would dare to say that. We must remember how their ambitions have been checked in the past—that it must often have seemed to them that their struggles for freedom were as useless as beating the air. Small wonder, if in times when all chances for action seemed lost, the Serbians gave an impression of letting their opportunities slide. Yet history tells us that their spirit of to-day has its roots in the past, and we can believe that it will not easily be destroyed.

CHAPTER IV

SHORTLY after the present war broke out, Mr. Lloyd George made a speech about the causes which led to this European tragedy. He said, 'Germany turned round to Russia, and said: "I insist that you shall stand by with your arms folded whilst Austria is strangling your little brother to death". What answer did the Russian Slav give? He gave the only answer that becomes a man. He turned to Austria and said, "You lay hands on that little fellow, and I will tear your ramshackle Empire limb from limb".'

This 'ramshackle' Empire of Austria is a collection of States, inhabited by portions of at least ten of the different races which are scattered along the Eastern borders of Europe. Many of these people are Slav in origin and sympathies. The size of the Empire is considerable. Next to Russia, it has the largest area of any State on the continent of Europe, and its population in 1910 was said to be over fifty-one millions.

It has never been choice, but generally chance, that has linked the races of this Empire together. A learned historian once said that Austria could not be called a nation; it was a State which 'had

been simply patched together during a space of six hundred years, by this or that grant, this and that marriage, this and that treaty'. If a rock lies in the bed of a stream, the chances are that smaller stones being washed down will find their progress arrested by it, and in time an island will appear. Something like this has happened in Eastern Europe. Around the possessions of the Hapsburg family a large and motley Empire has gradually collected, the members of which are not always either congenial or well suited to one another. As in the case of the island in the river, any accident might send all its fragments reeling down the stream, just because they are not cemented or bound in any way to the rock against which they have collected, so any shock might make the Austrian Empire begin to tumble to pieces.

The name Austria is somewhat misleading, because Austria is only one portion of the Empire. Austria and Hungary are the two main divisions, and the proper title is the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, or the Dual Monarchy. As a matter of fact, however, simply for the sake of convenience, the name is often shortened to Austria. The old Emperor (he was born in 1830), Francis Joseph, belongs to the ancient house of Hapsburg. He is styled 'His Imperial and Apostolic Royal Majesty'. He is also known officially as 'Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, and Apostolic King of Hun-

gary, &c.'—that is, all the titles by which he holds his various inheritances are added.

At the present day the government of this Empire is managed as follows: Both Austria—which includes the Austrian Tyrol, Bohemia, Istria, Dalmatia, and Galicia—and Hungary, which includes all the rest, have Parliaments. Added to this, there is a common government for the whole Empire and the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This common government deals with foreign affairs, military and naval matters, and any finance which affects the whole Empire. This arrangement dates from 1867, when an agreement known as *the Compromise* was made between Austria and Hungary.

When we inquire further into the government of this large Empire, we find there are many local parliaments, and it seems as if in consequence the subjects were allowed to take a large share in political matters. But though these facts look well enough on paper, in reality the people are justly discontented with the tyrannical nature of the government. In any case it could not be an easy affair to govern so many different races, mostly speaking different languages and dialects, and perhaps the worst possible way of governing them has been chosen. In Austria, the Germans are in power; in Hungary, the Magyars. These two races wish to keep the upper hand in the government,

so the laws of the country are often twisted dishonestly to obtain this end. Furthermore, the Germans and the Magyars subject the other races to many forms of petty persecution. They interfere with the education of the children, and try to force their own language on the other peoples. There is no justification for this. The inconveniences of having an Empire in which many languages are spoken are plain to all men. Doubtless it would make all business easier if there were one common language. But it is always hard and unjust to force a people to give up its language and literature for those of another nation. Though the Germans and the Magyars are outnumbered by the races over which they rule in Austria and Hungary, they behave as if the Empire were theirs to rule as they please. They look upon themselves as the heaven-sent rulers of the other races, just because they are united and their opponents are divided.

But the Austrian Government has not always been in this rickety condition. We have seen that the arrangement of affairs just described only dates from 1867. There is behind the Austria of to-day a history of great renown. When we read it, we can see that she has been growing less and less important in Europe ever since the beginning of the nineteenth century. We see how Prussia gradually gathered the German States around her-

self, and deliberately shut out Austria from the new German Empire. Prussia succeeded in doing this so thoroughly, that at last, instead of being one of the proudest and greatest of European States, poor Austria has sunk to the degraded condition of being Germany's dancing-bear.

In order to understand Austria's position clearly, we shall have to go back a long way in her history, and also we shall have to understand what was meant in olden days by the term *Empire*. Every one knows how Julius Caesar, the greatest of all Roman generals, founded the Roman Empire, which lasted unbroken for more than four hundred years. When it became difficult to defend the Empire, the plan was tried of dividing it, and setting up two Emperors, one ruling in Italy, the other in Constantinople, that the work of defence might be divided and so made easier. The plan was only partially successful. The Emperors of Constantinople held their own for many hundred years after the division: in fact their power did not vanish until the Turks took Constantinople (1453). But the Western Empire fell in 476.

Many rulers in Western Europe tried to revive this Roman Empire of the West: sometimes one man had more success than another. At last it came to this, that the Western Emperor was always some man chosen from among the German princes, by 'Electors' who were also German princes. The

title of Emperor was much sought after ; it was a coveted distinction, although the ruler who obtained it had very little authority over the German princes, and none over princes in other countries in Europe. This old institution of the Holy Roman Empire, as it was called, was kept up until 1806, when Napoleon did away with it. He was no friend to old titles and customs which had lost their real meaning.

Austria had gradually established in the Middle Ages a close connexion with this old institution of the Empire. The word Austria simply means ' Eastern land ', and long ago Austria was a *mark*, or border-land, which was given by the Emperor to a Duke. The Duke's duty was to keep the Magyars, or the people of Hungary, from invading the Empire. After a time the Magyars became Christian, and settled down, and in the course of time both Bohemia and Hungary were joined to Austria. After this the work of the Dukes of Austria was to defend Bohemia and Hungary and the border-lands of South-East Germany against the Turk ; and this kept them busy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As far back as the twelfth century the Hapsburgs, a powerful family from Western Germany, had become Dukes of Austria ; after 1453, they were raised to the rank of Archdukes. On many occasions the Dukes and Archdukes were elected

Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, until at last people began to look up to the Hapsburgs as the right and natural holders of the office. For more than three hundred years before the time of Napoleon, Hapsburg succeeded Hapsburg on the imperial throne, although few of them were remarkable men, and some were exceedingly stupid. In 1806, when Austria had been humbled to the dust by Napoleon, and the reigning Hapsburg was obliged to drop the ancient title, it was decided that, for the future, Hapsburg rulers should be called Emperors of Austria. This title they have held ever since.

But, as we said, Austria's greatness has steadily declined in the last hundred years. During the nineteenth century her history has been the record of troubles and mistakes on her part, which have degraded her, though at first she had great influence in the councils of Europe.

For instance, after Napoleon had been defeated at the battle of Leipzig, the Congress of Vienna, a meeting of the States of Europe, met to reorganize the political life of Europe (1814). Austria played a leading part in this, and secured great gains of territory, namely, Venice, Lombardy, Illyria, and a portion of Eastern Bavaria. Germany was reorganized, and a German Confederation set up with Austria at its head. But the Austrian Government now made a gigantic mistake. It set its face

against all democratic government. It showed that it did not believe in political liberty for the people. Thus in 1848, when a great wave of liberal thought swept over Europe, the Austrian Government set to work to suppress this sort of teaching in every possible way. There were revolutionary outbreaks in most European countries, in the Austrian possessions in Italy, in Hungary, and in Austria itself. It was plain that these could not be stamped out. At last Ferdinand, the Emperor, was obliged to fly the country. He abdicated (1848) in favour of his nephew Francis Joseph, who is reigning to this day.

Meanwhile, Prussia had become more and more jealous of Austria's influence in Germany, as Austria occupied the place of leader, which Prussia felt belonged to her. William I, King of Prussia, with the help of Bismarck, his Chancellor, and Moltke, his general, determined to alter this by pushing Prussia into the position of the first State in Germany. With this end in view, a quarrel was picked with Austria, and she was utterly defeated at Sadowa (or Königgratz), in Bohemia (1866). When peace was made with Prussia at Prague, Austria ceased to be reckoned part of Germany.

In this same year Austria lost Venice, the last of her possessions in Italy. For many years Italy had been struggling to regain her freedom. Three great men, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour, had stirred up

the Italians to drive the Austrians out of Northern Italy. The patriots fought at least three wars against Austria; but in the end it was Prussia which won Venice from the Austrians and handed it to Italy.

By the year 1866, Austria, then, had been worsted on all sides, and at the hands of Prussia and Italy. How is it, we ask, that to-day she finds herself a member of the Triple Alliance, the friend of Prussia and Italy? We may well ask this question.

Austria and Prussia were the first to patch up their differences, and the cause of their so doing was common jealousy of Russia, who inflicted a severe defeat upon the Turks in 1878. Both Austria and Prussia began to feel alarm about Russia's growing influence in the Balkans. This alliance was joined in 1883 by Italy, and thus the Triple Alliance came into being. Since that year it has been renewed from time to time for various periods of years. But the friendship has never been a steadfast one, and it is now a matter of common talk that for some years past Italy has been fretting at the connexion with Austria.

It was jealousy and fear of France which first moved Italy to ally with her former enemy, Austria. France had not treated the Italians well in their struggle for national liberty. When, therefore, both Italy and France began to think of colonizing in North Africa, and the Italians found

that France had got the start of them, Italy looked about for the support of some power which might serve as a check to France, if necessity arose, and found that support in the new German Empire which Bismarck, Moltke, and William I had created. But, after all, Italy's alliance with Austria can never be a cordial one. Italy is always anxious to get into her own hands the northern shores of the Adriatic and the Trentino—or unreclaimed Italy, as the Italians call it. These lands are inhabited chiefly by men of Italian birth, and Italians feel that it belongs by right to them. Meanwhile, the Austrian Empire holds on to these shores, wishing to maintain as many outlets to the sea as is possible.

Thus Austria may be said to have three great problems to face. First of all there is the scattered nature of her dominions, and the difficulty of defending her frontiers. Then there is the race-problem, which has become more difficult because she has not marched with the times. During this century in Europe there has been growing up the idea that nationalities should make their own governments, and that all classes must have a share in that government. Austria has never realized that the days of despotism are past and over. Added to this, the fact that the discontented people within her borders are akin to many of the peoples just outside her borders does not make the problem an easier one to solve.

Lastly, since the loss of her possessions in Italy, Austria has been anxious to gain a hold on the Mediterranean through the Balkans. She is not content with a small portion of the coast line of the Adriatic ; and here, as we have seen, her ambition brings her into conflict with a powerful branch of the Slav race, the Serbian nation and its allies.

When we have realized these three facts we are more in the position to understand the hectoring attitude of Austria over the Serajevo incident. She has been afraid that the welding together of the Slav interest in the Balkans would close the door of the Eastern Mediterranean. We believe, too, that Germany has been the evil genius of Austria. Germany meant to have a share in the advantages to be gained from the increase of Austria's power ; and so Germany egged her ally on to a course of action which will, almost inevitably, bring the Austro-Hungarian fabric of Empire crashing round the ears of the aged Francis Joseph or of his heir.

CHAPTER V

THE original cause of the present Great War was, as we have seen, the championship of the rights of one of the smallest States of Europe, by Russia, the largest Empire in Europe

It is very difficult for us to realize the enormous size of the Russian Empire. If we look at our maps we can see that it consists of a great rolling plain which stretches all across Northern Europe and Northern Asia, from the Baltic shores to the Pacific Ocean. Perhaps it does not mean much to us when we hear that this Empire includes one-sixth of the land of the habitable globe, and that it is occupied by at least one-twelfth of the population of the world. Yet Russia is important and interesting, not only on account of her size and the greatness of her population, but because she is the next-door neighbour of many of the nations of the world. She is very powerful both in Europe and Asia. Rudyard Kipling said, 'East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet', but they do meet as a matter of fact, and run into one another in the Russian Empire.

The peoples of Russia are scattered sparsely over her territories. She has few great cities: they might almost be counted on the fingers of both hands.

Petrograd, Moscow, Warsaw, Kiev, Lodz, Odessa, and Riga are the only cities which are considered large enough to be represented in the Duma, or National Assembly. Then too, we must remember that Russia is, like Canada, a nation of peasant farmers. At least eighty out of every hundred of her people are occupied in agriculture. Thus, although there are large cities and towns, and the educated classes in Russia are equal in intelligence and originality to the people of any European nations—though Russia has produced great scientists, historians, novelists, painters, poets, and musicians, yet the mass of the nation are simple, ignorant country folk, who live at great distances from one another. We realize this when we learn that in Russia the average number of inhabitants is twenty per square mile; whereas in Great Britain the proportion is over three hundred, and in a hive of industry like Belgium it was over six hundred.

We must remember too, that in Russia, the difficulties of communication between various parts of the country are far greater than in any other European State. It is true that the whole of the vast Empire is linked together from east to west by the Trans-Siberian Railway, which runs from Petrograd to Vladivostok. Yet this railway is comparatively new. It was only completed in 1891, and there are still many hundreds of miles

of country untouched by any railway. This is all the more to be regretted because the roads of Russia are not good. They have been described as broad brown tracks, which are deeply cut up by cart ruts, and which are sometimes tracks of slimy black mud, sometimes as dusty as the desert. Thus the vast majority of the Russian people have few chances of exchanging ideas with anybody except their immediate neighbours.

We are accustomed to think of Russia as the land of snow and ice. The winter is long and severe. It begins creeping over the country in September, and it may last until April. When the spring comes, it comes suddenly. The whole country is then wonderfully green and beautiful. The summers are very hot, even in Northern Russia. But for a large part of the year, that is during the winter and autumn months, the peasants are forced to live in idleness, spending long nights in ill-lit huts.

It has been the fashion recently for the Germans to scoff at the Russian nation; to say that there is a danger that the Russians will overrun Europe; that they are barbarous and uncivilized folk, and that it is unseemly for any decent European nation to be allied with them. But of late years foreigners have been travelling about Russia much more than used to be the custom. They have taught us many pleasant things about the Russian peasants, or *moujiks*, who as we have seen make up the bulk

of the nation. These peasants are brave, kind, and simple-minded. Humility comes naturally to them because of their constant struggle for a livelihood in the harsh climate. In fact these people have many of the qualities that we like and honour in men. They may not know much of the world, or of books, or commerce. They are perhaps none the worse for that. Certainly they are not a savage and brutal people as some would have us believe.

Travellers tell us that when they are in remote Russian villages they feel as if living in centuries long past and as if they were speaking to the sort of men or women who might have lived in the days of our poet Chaucer.

The great interest of the Russian peasant is his religion. The majority of the Russian peasants belong to the Greek Church, or the Church of the Eastern Empire. The Russians call it the 'Holy Catholic Apostolic and Orthodox Church'. To this Church also belong many of the Slavs of Austro-Hungary, the Greeks, the Roumanians, the Serbs, and the Bulgarians. The teaching of this Church is in many ways like that of the Western Roman Catholic Church, of which, long centuries ago, it was part. But whereas the services in the Roman Catholic Churches are read in the Latin tongue, which was at one time the common language of all educated persons in Europe, the services of the Orthodox Churches are held in the language of the

nation to which it belongs. The Russian peasants have made their religion a part of their everyday life. Religious observances and prayers are woven by them into their commonest actions. The services in their churches are still carried out according to ancient customs which have been handed down from generation to generation. Few of the peasants would care to see any alterations in the slightest particular. Moreover, a Russian peasant is quite willing to die for his faith, or to fight for it, if it be attacked, though he would not interfere with a person who had different beliefs. A war on behalf of any distressed members of the Orthodox Church is sure to find support among the bulk of the Russian people. Thus it was, that on the eve of this Great War, the Russian Government told Germany that the nation would never remain spectators while the Slavs of Serbia, who as we have seen are also members of the Orthodox Church, were being oppressed.

The Russian people are interesting to us not only because of the simple qualities of the peasants and the genius of their great men, but because it is only in recent years that they have attempted to develop a national government, in which the people have a share. In this, the twentieth century, the Russian folk are working out problems of government which were settled for us in the seventeenth century, at the time of the Great

Rebellion, and which were hammered out in France in the eighteenth century at the time of the French Revolution. Until 1905, the Tsar was an absolute monarch. His title is still 'Tsar and Autocrat of All the Russias'. In 1905, the Duma, or National Assembly, was established, and even now the Tsar has a great deal of power, and the governing classes are slow to let the people take any part in the government.

If this struggle for a share in the government by the Russian people has not always been as simple a task as we should like, we may remember that we, too, did not find the establishment of political liberty an easy matter. Much blood was shed in England before our disputes were settled. It is also interesting to know that many of the wisest Russian thinkers of the present day look to the example of Great Britain's Parliaments for political ideas.

How is it, we may ask, that Russia is still like a mediaeval country? Why are her people so unlike the nations of Europe? What does all this mean?

There are many answers which might be given to these questions. One of the most important is, that Russia, both by her geographical position and by the formation of her land, is naturally separated from other Western countries. We must remember that it is a country with a small coast line, and

one in which travel has always been difficult. Russians, therefore, have had very little opportunity or inducement to wander about either at home or abroad.

For many centuries, too, Russia was kept busy and occupied with her own business. The length of her frontier made invasions from the East at one time so frequent, that it is small wonder if she had little time or energy to attend to the West. Russia was completely overrun by the Tartars or Mongols from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Russians had too much to occupy their thoughts and their energies to take any part in the Reformation or Renaissance movements ; and so it is to-day that a large part of her country is still as Europe might have been, if all the men who laboured to bring about a revival of learning, and to reform the Western Catholic Church, had never lived.

The agricultural character of the country has also been one of the causes which have made the bulk of her people cease to make any progress. Serfdom existed in Russia from the sixteenth century right down to 1861, when it was abolished. At one time, owing to the difficulties of procuring labour, the peasants were forbidden to move from village to village, in search of better wages, kinder landlords, or more fertile land. As a result of this regulation, a condition of serfdom arose ; that is,

the peasants were considered part and parcel of the land, and were transferred with it. They were also forced to do a certain amount of work upon their landlords' estates. Furthermore, until 1906 a peasant only owned his land as a member of the village community, or *Mir*; his land might be scattered about in strips in different parts of the village, in order that no peasant might have all the good land, or all the bad land. Perhaps every year the land would be re-divided among the whole village community. This did not encourage the peasant to take trouble with his work. He knew that some day, however hard he had worked to improve his strips of land, all the results of his labour and care might be handed over to another man. When at last it became possible for the peasant to hold his land as a compact farm, or even to sell his claim on the community outright, he became more ambitious and eager for improvement.

During the last fifty years, there has gradually arisen a certain amount of unrest in Russia. The peasants have begun to migrate to the towns, and education has spread. With education has come the desire for a share in the government of the country. The people who have drifted to the towns have gradually begun to demand something more than the *Ukases*, or simple commands of the Tsar. But, as there will always be some people in

every country who oppose a liberal movement of this sort, so on the other hand there will always be some who desire to bring about great changes too fast; the existence of such rival parties has been the cause of many of Russia's troubles in recent years

Thus both the geography of the country, and the institutions which have grown up because of the agricultural occupations of the people, have combined to keep Russia for many centuries apart from Western Europe.

It was Peter the Great (1689-1725), the national hero of Russia, just as Alfred the Great is the national hero of England, who pushed his country forward from its place in the background, and made it a force in European politics.

It was his fixed intention to put Russia on an equality with other European nations. Peter was an extraordinary man. Sometimes he behaved like a savage, sometimes like a genius. He set to work to civilize his people almost by force. For this end he travelled about Western Europe, picking up all the practical knowledge he could. The story goes that he even learned shipbuilding as an ordinary shipwright in Holland. When he returned, he determined to make his subjects change their old-fashioned ways, whether they wished it or not. The coinage was restored, old laws were revised, old customs

and traditions were abolished. Mining and trade were encouraged, and the city of Petersburg (now Petrograd) was founded. To crown all these efforts, in 1721 he declared Russia an Empire, and he took the title 'Father of the Fatherland, Peter the Great, Emperor of All Russia'. His reason for taking this high-sounding title was that, since the Eastern Empire had come to an end in 1453, with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, he considered himself, the ruler of Russia, the greatest State in Eastern Europe, as possessing a right to that name.

Ever since the days of Peter the Great, Russia has taken an important part in European politics, though her people have remained, on the whole, primitive and uneducated farmers. In the nineteenth century her position became extremely important. It was her sturdy resistance which did most to bring about Napoleon's downfall. And, although Russia and Great Britain are now firm allies, it is useless to try and pretend that they have always been friends. We have seen (Chapter I) how Great Britain and France fought against Russia on behalf of Turkey in the Crimean War. For some years after this war, Russia turned her attention to spreading her Empire in Asia. She obtained ports on the Pacific, colonized Siberia, and made several conquests in Turkestan round about the territory of Afghanistan. This caused

much alarm to the people of Great Britain. In 1877, too, she again attacked Turkey. The alleged causes of this war were the horrible cruelty of the Turks to their Bulgarian Christian subjects, and the massacres which had taken place in Bulgaria in 1876. The war began badly at first for the Russians. The Turks retreated to Plevna, and there they held out for five months. The Russians suffered three defeats before its walls, but at last the city was forced to capitulate with forty thousand men. Then the Russians began a successful advance. Constantinople was on the point of falling, when the British Government intervened, and sent a fleet to protest against the total overthrow of the Turkish power in Europe. Peace was made at San Stefano; but, as its terms gave Russia great influence over Turkey, Western Europe, headed again by Great Britain, took the matter up, and modified the terms by the Treaty of Berlin, 1878.

The year 1878 is an important date in European history, because ever since that year Germany and Austria have been determined to put an end to Russia's influence in the Balkans. It was this object that led to the building up of the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy. In name the alliance has been a defensive one; but we have seen how under the shadow of its security Austria and Germany have long been casting

greedy eyes upon the Balkan States, and when we come to read the history of Germany, we shall see that, relying on its strength, that country has for some years past adopted a hectoring or bullying attitude to the other Powers of Europe. Thus the Triple Alliance has more than once in the twentieth century brought Europe to the verge of war.

So strong have Germany and Austria thought themselves that since 1890, when Bismarck was dismissed, they have not troubled to keep on good terms with Russia. It has been growing only too apparent during the past few years that Germany has been spoiling for a fight. Consequently Russia, France, and Great Britain have gradually settled their differences. The impending common danger has forced them to settle their affairs—just as a sensible man will not quarrel with his wife if he hears armed burglars coming down the garden-path. These three countries made no common league before 1914, but they treated separately one with another. Thus in 1896 the Dual Alliance was made between France and Russia; in 1904 there was an Entente, or agreement, between France and Great Britain, and in 1907 another Entente between Russia and Great Britain. So that it is not true, as has been stated, that Great Britain, France, and Russia ranged themselves in opposition to the Triple Alliance, and thus provoked a war. We came into the war because France

was attacked, and the neutrality of Belgium was violated. The only united pronouncement of the Allies was made after the war broke out, when they announced their intention of not making peace separately. Germany has shown to the whole world by her conduct during the war, that her victory would be a disaster without parallel in the history of human progress; and it is her conduct which has cemented the Triple Entente.

CHAPTER VI

GERMANY, as a united nation, has been the most powerful State of Western Europe for the past forty-five years. And yet she is comparatively a new-comer among the Great Powers of Europe. It is to Prussia on the one hand that she owes the rapid growth of her importance, it is to Prussia on the other hand that she pays a heavy penalty for her prosperity. Ever since 1871 the will of Prussia has been the will of Germany. For whatever may be the theory of German government, it is Prussia that dictates modern German policy.

At the present day Germany is organized for purposes of government in a Confederation ; that is, a number of States are combined together in a league. The twenty-six States of Germany are under the leadership of the King of Prussia, who also bears the title of German Emperor. The States send delegates or deputies to the *Bundesrath* (Federal Council), and the people, by manhood suffrage, elect representatives for the *Reichstag* (Parliament). These two assemblies make the laws for the whole Empire, while it is the duty of the German Emperor to see that they are carried out.

The local government of each of the twenty-six leagued States is carried on independently of the central Government, according to institutions which in some cases have been handed down from the past, or in other cases have only been recently adopted. The important point is that the King of Prussia has very great power over the central Government. The officials of the Government are responsible to him alone. Prussia, possessing as she does a majority of members in the *Bundesrath* and the *Reichstag*, can impose her will on both assemblies. Thus no lawful opposition to the Emperor's power will ever count for much. He does much as he likes unless he gets into the hands of unscrupulous schemers.

For these reasons, when we want to learn about the rise of modern Germany it is to the history of the kingdom of Prussia that we instinctively turn. We know it was the soldiers and statesmen of Prussia who, in the nineteenth century, designed the organization of the present German nation; and the Prussians who nowadays manipulate the machinery of government are only carrying out the plans of their fathers.

In one respect the rise of the Prussian kingdom much resembles the rise of the Austrian Empire. We have seen how that Empire grew up around the possessions of the family of Hapsburg. In the same way the Prussian kingdom grew up

round the family estates of the Hohenzollerns, to whom the present Emperor or Kaiser, William II, belongs. But there is this momentous difference to notice between the fortunes of the two families. The Hapsburgs gained their territories chiefly by well-thought-out marriage alliances; the Hohenzollerns won theirs by the power of the sword. Thus the Hohenzollerns have behind them all the warlike traditions of a line of soldier kings. Their ancestors ruled their estates with a rod of iron, and made it a point of honour, whenever it was possible, to win more lands by fighting. And so it came to pass that, whether they were waging war or not, their chief delight was to busy themselves with military affairs. They gathered together and drilled to perfection armies of fine warriors. 'Blood and iron,' as Bismarck used to say, might very well have been their motto for many generations.

The Hohenzollerns have always been jealous of the Hapsburgs. For some hundreds of years the Hapsburg family was the most powerful in Europe; and custom taught people to revere the head of this family as the natural bearer of the title 'Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire'. But the Hohenzollerns, in comparison with the Hapsburgs, are late-comers into the society of the kings of Europe; for it was not until the eighteenth century that Prussia rose to importance. The

province from which this kingdom takes its name is situated on the shores of the Baltic. In the thirteenth century its inhabitants were still heathen, and a band of Crusaders, the Teutonic Knights, settled there, and made it their duty to convert the Prussians to Christianity. In the sixteenth century, at the time of the Reformation, the Order of the Teutonic Knights was dissolved, and the last Grand Master of the Order, who was related to the Elector of Brandenburg, became hereditary Duke of Prussia. In the seventeenth century Prussia and Brandenburg were joined together; and at last the Elector of Brandenburg was allowed by the Emperor to take the title of King of Prussia. The man who did most to raise Prussia to the rank of a first-rate Power in Europe was King Frederick the Great (1740-86).

All this time Germany was united only under the Emperor. Napoleon abolished the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, and he made several attempts to reorganize Germany; but after the Congress of Vienna, in 1814, a German Confederation was set up, with Austria at its head. This Confederation was governed by a Diet, or Parliament, which was held at Frankfort; the separate States each had its own government as at the present day.

But the Prussian Kings were by no means content to play second fiddle to Austria in German politics. William I and Bismarck, a Prussian

nobleman who was his Chancellor or chief minister, began scheming to make Prussia the leading State in the German Confederation. These two men were so ambitious for power that they allowed few scruples to thwart them in the accomplishment of their ends.

Bismarck pushed Prussia to the forefront by three great wars. The first was fought against Denmark in 1864, over the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. Bismarck induced Austria to join with Prussia in demanding that these territories should be surrendered by the King of Denmark to the German Confederation. The King of Denmark refused; but when Austria and Prussia began to make war on him he was very quickly beaten. Then Bismarck annexed the provinces to Prussia without paying any attention to the claims of Austria. If we remember that it is through the province of Holstein that the Prussians afterwards cut the Kiel Canal, we begin to realize what Bismarck had in his mind when he quarrelled with Denmark. He wanted to get to the North Sea.

The second war arose out of the first, for the quarrel over these duchies brought on a war with Austria. This was exactly what Bismarck wanted. He knew that the critical moment had come, and that he might now crush Austria and turn her out of the Confederation of German States. This he

actually did by means of one short campaign against Austria, which lasted seven weeks and ended at the battle of Sadowa (or Königgratz), 1866; and Prussian jealousy of Austria was for the moment satisfied.

In a few years Prussia was engaged in a war with her other rival, France (1870-1). This war was wickedly provoked by Bismarck, and the pretext given for it was so slight that it has almost been forgotten at this day, although the sorrow and shame of that war have an undying place in the memories of Frenchmen.

The question whether or no a Hohenzollern prince should be allowed to accept the throne of Spain was at that time a matter of dispute between the two nations. During the negotiations, King William, who was at Ems, sent Bismarck a telegram describing what had happened. Bismarck altered this telegram until it looked like an insult to France, and allowed it to be published in all the newspapers. France felt herself insulted, and declared war. But as she was not prepared for war, she was speedily defeated, and when peace was made she paid dearly for her rashness. She was obliged to give up the border provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, with the fortresses of Strasbourg and Metz. She also had to pay a huge war indemnity. Towards the end of the war, in 1871, when the German nation was flushed with victory,

King William I of Prussia was allowed to crown himself German Emperor at Versailles. For nearly twenty years after this war Bismarck acted as his Chancellor.

Ever since 1871 it has been Prussian ideas and aims which have influenced modern Germany; and gradually, owing to their prosperity, the German nation have become beset with the idea that they are the salt of the earth, and have a mission to civilize the rest of the world. They have advanced so much in material wealth that their heads have been turned; and all their writers and men of science have spent their time teaching that German culture—that is, German moral and intellectual training—must be spread eventually, by force of arms if need be, throughout the world.

Although other Western nations have begun to look on war with horror, to think of it as the last method by which disputes should be settled, and as a disaster which must be avoided as long as possible, the German Government and German thinkers have been taking exactly the opposite course. They have taught that war is a good thing in itself; that it purifies and strengthens a nation, and that without it national life becomes weak and base and worthless. They have taught the German people to laugh at the teaching of Christianity about the duties of peacemakers: and instead they

have dinned into the ears of their hearers the statement that the soldier who makes new conquests is really the man who does his country the highest service.

It is impossible for any one who reads, thinks, or travels to deny that Germany has made great progress during the past forty years or so. Her trade has grown, her population has increased from forty-one to sixty-five millions. This prosperity is due to many causes: the complete triumph of Germany over the past of her rivals, France, is not the only cause. But Germans nowadays are apt to talk as if all they have gained has been added to them for their so-called righteous warfare. Germany has become dazzled and confused with her own success, and drunk with ambition. Her people have imagined that Germany alone of the nations has learnt the secret of success.

But the great and wonderful progress of Germany, which is freely admitted by the rest of Europe, has not made the German nation more generous. All the time Germany has been jealous of the welfare and prosperity of other nations, and she has had an uneasy conscience about the possession of Alsace and Lorraine. She has believed, or has affected to believe, that France has been always preparing and waiting for the opportunity of revenge; whereas France, though cut to the quick

by the loss of these provinces, has of recent years devoted her best energies to gaining and organizing colonies in North Africa.

In any case, this fear of France has been put forward over and over again by the Germans as an excuse for their military policy. Any increase in the armies of other countries has always been jealously watched. Unluckily, France began to increase the normal strength of her army in 1886, because of the great increase of Germany's population; and ever since that day there has been a constant race in military preparations between European Powers, with the exception of Great Britain. It is no exaggeration to say that it was the race to pile up a large army which almost forced France to ally herself with Russia, because she felt that sooner or later she would have to face Germany in arms, and that whereas the German population was increasing by leaps and bounds, hers was becoming stationary.

But Germany has not been content with maintaining the largest army in Europe. Ever since 1896 she has been increasing the strength of her navy to compete with that of Great Britain. The other nations of Europe have naturally asked, 'How does Germany mean to use such a large navy? Her coast line is small, her colonies are few: why does Germany aim at having as large a navy as even Great Britain has for the defence

of her vast colonial Empire ? ' The nations might well ask these questions ; and when Germany time after time refused to listen to argument, or to come to any agreement with other nations as to the size of her navy, and after every remonstrance began building ships faster than ever, there were many people who rightly suspected that she meant mischief. We now know that the German Government has for some years past been plotting first to crush the other Powers of Europe, and then to gain the mastery of the whole world. The Germans say that this lofty ambition is justifiable by their excellence ; for there are many of them who agree with the Kaiser's remark, ' We are morally and intellectually superior to all men '.

This strong position of Germany and her blind self-confidence in her own perfections have made her conduct towards other European nations, at many times during the past twenty years, boorish and overbearing. Over and over again Germany, when she has seen her neighbours engrossed in difficulties, has seized that opportunity either to humiliate or insult them.

We have seen how in 1909 she humiliated Russia by backing up Austria, who in defiance of an international engagement had annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. We know that Russia, handicapped by a disastrous war with Japan (which, there are good reasons for believing, was largely

provoked by Germany), was unable to make good any promises of support that she had given to the Slavs.

Again, France has never been allowed to forget the presence of her jealous and powerful neighbour. The form of annoyance to which Germany has subjected her is constant interference with French interests in Morocco. One of the grievances of Germany to-day is her lack of profitable colonies. Before she tried to colonize upon a large scale, the territories of the globe had been parcelled out among other nations of the world. Bismarck did not care about gaining colonies for Germany. He contented himself with increasing German power on the continent of Europe.

The French people, on the other hand, have during the past thirty years devoted a great deal of time and thought to extending and developing their colonies. It is the general establishment of French influence in North Africa which has particularly irritated the German Government: twice has the German Emperor shaken the quiet of Europe by attacking French interests in this part of the 'Dark Continent'. France adopted a policy of 'peaceful penetration' towards Morocco—that is, she developed a large trade with that country. Many of her merchants live there, and in 1904, when there were disturbances, she urged the Sultan to reform his government, having

previously induced England to give her a free hand in Morocco. There was some show of rebellion against this interference, and the German Emperor complicated matters by visiting Tangier and declaring that he also ought to have been consulted, and that he would deal directly with the Sultan, without regard to France. Then he not only lent the Sultan money, but insisted that a Conference of the European Powers should be called to consider the question of reform. The Conference was held at Algéiras; and after it France was obliged to get rid of her Foreign Minister, Delcassé, who was displeasing to Germany. She was not prepared for war, and her ally Russia was weakened by the Japanese War. The German Emperor's attitude at least awakened the French nation from any false sense of security. Therefore, in 1911, when the German Emperor again interfered by sending a gunboat, the *Panther*, to protect his German traders on the occasion of a rising in Morocco, he was faced by the Anglo-French Entente. In 1912 France replied to his threatening attitude by establishing a Protectorate over Morocco. It is small wonder that France did not look upon Germany as a friend; for in her time of weakness France had suffered great humiliation at the hands of Germany.

All this while, too, the Germans had been expressing very plainly their contempt for Great

Britain and all things British. Their Emperor openly sympathized with the Boers during their struggle with us. He also filled the Belgians with well-grounded alarm by building military railways upon their borders, long before the war broke out.

These doings account for the general mistrust with which Germany was regarded before August 1914. People felt that she was a firebrand, and that she was too powerful. The general result has been that Germany has no friends, except Austria and Turkey. The former country appears to be powerless in her hands, and the latter has allowed itself to be ruined and made into a cat's-paw by Germany.

The peoples of the world have felt that, although the Germans are a great nation in many ways, they wish to crush out all people who do not think their thoughts, or live their lives, in the German manner. The Allies know that the hope of the future of mankind must be in the toleration of a large variety of nations by one another; that it is not good that all intellectual work should be of the same pattern. Every nation and every race has made, in its best and highest work, some contribution to the common inheritance and good of the human race.

CHAPTER VII

OLD men and women in England to-day are not surprised to see French and Germans fighting one another. They can remember the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1. In France the old people have done more than remember the war themselves; they have taken good care that their children, and their children's children, shall not forget how their country was humbled to the dust by the arms of Prussia. French men and women mourned over the defeat as deeply as they would over the death of a dear friend.

We saw in the last chapter how Bismarck, the Chancellor of the King of Prussia, plotted and planned to make his people feared and looked up to throughout all Europe. We saw how he beat down Austria, because he hated the idea of the other German peoples calling the Emperor of Austria their leader.

When this was accomplished, he turned upon France. France was a powerful and famous State; though she was not so much feared as in the time of the great Napoleon, the policy of Napoleon III had given her the leading place among the continental nations. Bismarck thought that if Prussia

could lead the Germans and humble France, no one would then doubt which was the most powerful State in Europe. All men, he hoped, would turn their eyes to Prussia. With this idea in view, he deliberately provoked France to a quarrel, knowing that the French people are always quick to resent an insult.

In hasty anger, France fell into the trap which had been prepared for her, and declared war upon Prussia. It was a war for which France was quite unprepared, in spite of the boasting of her generals, who said all was ready, even to the last button on the soldiers' gaiters. The war was swift: it lasted only from July to March; the defeat was humiliating. In the end, the Prussians not only took from France two valuable border provinces, Alsace and Lorraine, and compelled the payment of a huge sum of money (£240,000,000) to pay for the cost of the war, but they also used their conquest to humble the French as much as was possible. Thus, after the siege and fall of Paris, they celebrated their victory by a procession through the city; their troops clanked down the main streets, and passed under the great triumphal arch (*Arc de Triomphe*) which had been put up to remind all French people of the glorious victories of the Great Napoleon.

Moreover, Bismarck would not trust the French nation to pay him the money they had promised.

German troops were kept in the strong places in France until every penny was paid off. Yet, as it happened, the soldiers soon went home, for the French are a proud nation; though money was scarce, and though the war had caused great poverty and want, within six months the debt, which in those days was considered an enormous sum, was paid off. This made the Prussians sorry that they had not asked for more. They openly said that next time they would 'bleed France white'—her people should have no mercy from them.

The French learned much from their defeat, for it had not come about because they were, as the Germans imagined, an exhausted and worn-out nation. The fault was in their leaders. The spirit of the men who filled the ranks of the French armies was sound enough; they were brave and they were patriotic; but they were commanded by men who did not understand the strength of the enemy, and were not clever enough to outwit German cunning. And when they began the war they were governed by Napoleon III, a man who was only a skilful adventurer. He had beguiled the French people into making him their Emperor, partly because he was a kinsman of the great Napoleon, of whom as a nation the French are extremely proud, partly because he was a fair-spoken and popular man. Napoleon himself had

begun to trust too much in the superstitious respect which people felt for his name. And when trouble came upon France he had not the wit to choose clever men to help him in his difficulties. Unlike a great ruler, he was not able to judge whether a man was skilful or stupid at his work ; and so he surrounded himself with men who were doubtless pleasant enough, but not of the sort to fight victorious battles against desperate odds, or see through the cunning of a scheming enemy. And so, from the beginning of the war, all the advantage was with the Germans. To the French the war was unexpected, but the Germans had long before made their plans ; they had thought out everything that would be needed while their army was in the field, and nothing had been left to chance.

It is as well for us to remember the chief events of that terrible campaign, because nowadays people often speak of those times and compare the war of 1870 with the present war.

At first Napoleon III thought that his army would invade the territory of the Germans, and so punish them for the insult they had offered the French nation. But he proved to be bitterly mistaken ; for although at first the French gained a slight victory, disaster soon followed upon disaster, and it was the Germans who invaded France. At last a large part of the French army was shut

up in Metz, and another army which was coming to its relief was forced to surrender at Sedan. Napoleon III himself was taken prisoner and all his men were disarmed, except his officers, who were allowed to keep their swords. The little cottage used to be shown outside which Bismarck and the fallen Emperor conferred together after the battle, though doubtless by now it is swept away. Bismarck wished the Emperor to declare that his defeat meant that the French nation was conquered, but Napoleon would not do this. Even if he had agreed, it would have made little difference; for shortly afterwards news came that his discontented subjects were in revolt, that they had declared him deposed, that they had set up a Republic—the Third Republic, as it was called. And so the birthday of the modern French Republic was a day of sorrow and defeat. That day is also considered by the Germans as the birthday of the new German Empire. The victory gave the King of Prussia and his generals such a reputation with the other peoples of Germany that shortly afterwards they allowed the King of Prussia to crown himself Emperor of Germany. This he did in the royal palace of the Kings of France near Paris. The anniversary of the victory of Sedan is to this day celebrated with great rejoicings in Germany.

As the newly-formed Government in Paris would

not listen to the demands of Moltke and Bismarck, the Prussian armies marched from Sedan against Paris and laid siege to it. The siege lasted from September 19, 1870, to January 28, 1871. The Parisians suffered very great hardships before they gave in. They were obliged even to eat rats, cats, and dogs ; and their only means of communicating with the outside world were balloons and carrier pigeons. At last the Government were forced to offer terms of peace, and they got little mercy from the Germans. This was a great mistake on the part of the conquerors. When the French general was bargaining with Bismarck after Sedan, he said that it would be wiser for the Germans to show generosity than harshness, because in this way they would earn the gratitude of France : and it might be the beginning of a lasting peace ; otherwise, he said, a long succession of wars was all that might be expected. But the Germans took all that they could get from the French ; and it was this lack of generosity which planted a long-lived distrust of Germany in French minds.

After the war France was at first too weak to make plans for recovering her lost provinces. But French people did not forget. One of her great men said, ‘Think of it always and never speak of it’. As time passed, and France grew stronger, and more able to fight, many of her people had grown to hate war, and had become the friends

of peace. Still, new generations of French people grew up, believing that Germany was an enemy who would strike when an opportunity occurred. The possession of the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine by Germany made such an attack more probable, for it was thus much easier for the Germans to enter France than before.

The people of these two provinces—though many of them are of German descent and have always spoken German—have never liked the change of government. They had grown to like French ways, French laws, and the French government. But the Germans were determined if possible to turn them into a truly German race, and to make them patriotic citizens of the German Empire. They tried to do this by force—by interfering with the education of the children, and by issuing proclamations ordering the use of the German tongue. Hence a large part of the population of these provinces has grown up with a rooted dislike to all things German, and these people have become a living monument to the losses of the French people in 1870–1. As for the French, they hate this German occupation of part of their country as much as we should hate the occupation of Kent and Sussex.

We can now see how it is that French people have always had before their minds the possibility of another German attack. They have never lost

their dread and dislike of Germany. Although they have not been anxious to make war upon Germany, they have made every preparation that they could to resist attack. As the population of Germany has increased, France has enlarged her army, and has made alliances with Russia and Great Britain. And for this we cannot blame her ; for we have seen that on several occasions she has had warnings that trouble might come. It would not be fair to accuse her of brooding in a revengeful spirit over her losses, but she has been keenly alive to the fact that she had a dangerous enemy for a neighbour.

But, in spite of this fear of another war, France has not been idle during the years which have glided away since the Franco-Prussian War. She has been quietly building up for herself a large colonial empire. Germany has made good her ambition of being the most powerful country on the continent of Europe ; France has not attempted to compete with Germany in Europe, but has turned her own attention to the African shores of the Mediterranean. This was no new imperial ambition ; for in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries France was the chief rival of Great Britain for colonial power ; and during that period there was constant warfare between settlers from the two countries in all parts of the globe. Gradually, however, her possessions dropped

away, until at the beginning of the nineteenth century her colonial empire was very small. But this has been remedied, and nowadays she holds the greater part of North Africa.

We saw in the last chapter how jealous Germany has become of these colonies, and how she has seized opportunities for picking quarrels with France over the African question. Great Britain and Russia and France have all managed to make great empires, Germany is out in the cold. Not until all the available countries had been parcelled out did Germany begin to look around with a jealous eye. We saw how on two occasions she has interfered with the French management of Morocco, and seemed likely to fight about it.

It has been in response to these threats of attack that France has made alliances. First of all came the Dual Alliance with Russia, which has quite recently become estranged from Germany. Bismarck always urged upon the old German Emperor William I the necessity for keeping the friendship of Russia. But the present Emperor William II dismissed Bismarck from his service in 1890. The event was celebrated by a famous drawing in *Punch*, called 'Dropping the Pilot', which represented Bismarck as an old weather-worn seaman leaving his ship. Soon after this event Russia and France began to make friends, and by 1896 the Dual Alliance was made. France is rich in

money, Russia is rich in men ; and so, in return for promises of protection, France agreed to lend the Russians the money which they required to open new industries and to make improvements in their country, which is so backward.

Later on, France and Great Britain began to settle various points of dispute which had arisen between them, and then the Anglo-French understanding (*Entente*) was made. Furthermore, French statesmen began to hope and work for a greater spirit of friendliness between Great Britain and Russia. These two countries had for many years been jealous rivals in Asia. But notwithstanding this, in the presence of the German threat of war, an Anglo-Russian Entente was agreed upon.

The Germans have accused the French of building up a Triple Entente which was bound to break the peace of Europe. This charge is one which is based on misunderstandings. It is Germany, not France, who by her restless ambition has divided Europe into two camps. We cannot tell ourselves at the present time what men are responsible for this mischievous policy, but we know they are men of the German nation. All we can believe is that the German people cannot know the facts of the case. Sixty-five million people cannot have become knaves in a moment. We can only believe that when their best men know the truth they will feel the humiliation of this war even more greatly than

did the generation of Frenchmen who lived and fought in 1870-1 ; and that this humiliation will come not only because the Allies must beat them to the dust, but because the Germans have fought and given their best to a miserable cause—the ruthless ambition of a mere handful of men.

CHAPTER VIII

ONE of the chief reasons which compelled Great Britain to join in this war was that Germany made clear her intention of forcing a way through the territory of Belgium with her armies, in order that she might attack France the more quickly ; in other words, Germany determined to *violate Belgian neutrality*.

What does this word neutrality mean ? How has it come about that until the other day Belgium was a neutral State ? Why were we bound to protest against the action of Germany ? and why do we feel called upon to avenge Belgium ?

These are some of the questions which we must ask ourselves. It is in our sense of justice, in the events of recent times, and in the history of ages long ago, that we shall find the answers. As we read history our consciences will give us explanations and reasons without which we could not properly understand the momentous events which are happening at the present time.

A neutral State is bound to stand aside from all the quarrels and disputes of its neighbours. It may defend itself from attack and it may make alliances for self-defence, but it may make no war to defend an ally. A neutral State, furthermore, must not

allow the soldiers of a nation which is engaged in war a passage through her territories ; nor may it permit supplies or materials of war to be conveyed through them. This definition of neutrality has long been understood in Europe, and it was confirmed by the Great Powers, among which of course was Germany, at The Hague Conference in 1907. Germany cannot pretend, and indeed has never pretended, that she did not understand the meaning of the word neutrality in August 1914.

It is clear that no State, unless it be both small and powerless, would choose, or even consent, to be placed in the position of a *perpetually neutral State*. The Great Powers had good reasons for giving this character to the kingdom of Belgium in 1839. Had not some such arrangement been made, it was thought that Europe was likely to be in a constant state of warfare. Two facts pointed then, as now, to this conclusion. First, Belgium, the smallest and the most prosperous State in Europe, is almost surrounded by mighty neighbours. The occupation of Belgium by Great Britain, France, or Germany, would give the invading Power a great advantage in a European war. There are no better starting-points for an attack on Great Britain than the ports of Antwerp and Ostend ; and we can see by a glance at the map that the most convenient and the most direct line of march between France and Germany lies

across the plains and valleys of the Low Countries. Secondly, Belgium, under a variety of names, such as the Netherlands, or the Low Countries, has for long been one of the most prosperous regions of Europe. Her soil is fertile, her people are industrious; her waterways and her railways make trade an easy matter. Therefore this country has always been one of the most coveted spots on the globe. In consequence, it has been for centuries 'the battlefield of Northern Europe'. We remember the wars of Marlborough in the Netherlands during the reign of Good Queen Anne. We have heard how in later days the enemies of Napoleon struggled in order to oust him from that country. We ought to remember, too, that the battle of Waterloo, which caused Napoleon's downfall, was fought upon the plains just outside Brussels. Truly the Flemings and the Walloons, who together make up the Belgian nation, have seen more than their share of fighting.

For these reasons the Great Powers decided that Belgium must be made into a neutral State for the sake of the peace of Europe. This arrangement is not very old; it was made in the early years of last century, after a time of confusion and trouble for Belgium. Until that time, Belgium was a bundle of provinces which were often handed about from one ruler to another. These rulers taxed the people, and generally lived as absentees

in their own native countries. For some time before the outbreak of the French Revolution it was to the Austrian House of Hapsburg that Belgium belonged. During the revolutionary wars Belgium became part of France; it remained in the hands of France till the downfall of Napoleon, and during that time it was governed just as if it were one of the outlying districts of France. But when the allies dethroned Napoleon, all this was altered. The French were driven out, and Belgium and Holland were united under one king, who took the name of 'King of the Netherlands'. This union, it was hoped, would make one strong State, well able to defend itself, yet not large enough to arouse the jealousy of the rest of Europe.

But, unfortunately, the Belgians and the Dutch disagreed upon too many points to make it possible to hope for a happy union. They spoke different languages, they admired different methods of government; furthermore, the Dutch were Protestants, and the Belgians were Roman Catholics. At last the two nations quarrelled outright, and civil war arose. The upshot was that their governments were again separated. By the Treaty of London, 1839, Belgium was recognized as an 'independent but perpetually neutral State'. This treaty was signed by Great Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia. The neutrality was again confirmed in 1870, in the time of the Franco-

Prussian War, by Prince Bismarck on behalf of the German Confederation, and by France.

Great Britain then, together with other Powers, pledged her word that the neutrality of Belgium should be respected. We must be quite clear that this arrangement about Belgium was not made entirely for the good of the Belgians. It was made, as we have seen, in order that the peace of Europe might be made more secure. The Treaty of London was, as it were, a bulwark of peace, founded upon the honour of the nations whose representatives had signed it.

During the negotiations which preceded the Great War of 1914, there was clear evidence that the Germans were preparing to attack France as quickly as possible; that they wished their troops to reach Paris by the shortest and easiest route, before the Russians had begun to attack them in the rear. There was every reason for suspecting that their plan was to pass through Belgium, down the valley of the Meuse, past Liège, Namur, and Dinant, and so on to Paris. They hoped to defeat France within a month, and then turn all their forces on Russia.

It was when this plan became apparent that Sir Edward Grey determined to find out whether or no the Great Powers were prepared to respect and renew the obligations which they had taken upon themselves in 1839 and 1870. We have seen

that France answered that she was prepared to keep to her bond ; that Belgium said she was ready to uphold it ; that Germany alone gave no reply. This silence was held by Great Britain to amount to a refusal, and war was declared by us on Germany.

The outbreak of the war compelled us to realize how the German Government thinks fit to regard international agreements. We have seen (Chap. II) how the German Chancellor, in his last interview with our ambassador, contemptuously referred to the Treaty of London as ' a scrap of paper '. He said it ought not to be regarded as a barrier to prevent the Germans doing as they wished. The Chancellor also made the following statement in the Reichstag (Parliament) :

' Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. . . . Our troops have occupied Luxemburg, and perhaps are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened, as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest possessions, can have only one thought—how he is to hack his way through.'

Clearly the Germans believed that promises which had been made to other nations could be put aside whenever they became inconvenient

pledges. Just four days before their attack on Belgium, when all their plans were made, they assured the Belgian Government that no troops should endeavour to make a passage through their country. This crowning falsehood shows, better than any other act of the German Government, their contempt for truth and honesty.

Possibly we think that, when this story of Germany's breach of faith with Europe has been told, it is hardly necessary to make any further defence of the action of Great Britain in joining in the war; but Mr. Asquith's words, in his speech in the House of Commons on August 6, 1914, justifying the course which Great Britain was taking by entering upon the war, are worth remembering, and will not easily be forgotten. 'If I am asked what we are fighting for,' he said, 'I reply in two sentences. In the first place, to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between two private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law, but of honour, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated.' Mr. Asquith meant that if two men had made a bargain of this nature and one had broken his word, not only would he have been legally liable to pay damages, but his good name would have been gone for ever, and no one would ever have trusted him again.

Secondly, Mr. Asquith went on to explain that we are fighting to defend the doctrine that the small States of Europe are not to be crushed whenever it shall please their stronger neighbours, in spite of solemn promises of protection. In other words, we are fighting to uphold international law ; for until we have a system of international law we shall never be able to maintain any sort of federation of the States of Europe.

If Germany has failed to keep her promises, Belgium has nobly fulfilled her part of the contract, and has endeavoured to uphold her neutrality. It is well said that she saved Europe. We know how the Belgians resisted the Germans at Liège, although they were taken by surprise. General Leman, a hero whose name will be handed down from generation to generation, needed 74,000 men to defend Liège and its ring of twelve fortresses which bar the valley of the Meuse. He had only 40,000. But both at Liège and at Brussels the Germans were baulked. They imagined they would march straight through Belgium to the French frontier, but although they entered Belgium on August 4, they did not reach the French frontier until the 23rd. Those nineteen days proved the salvation of Europe, for the French commander-in-chief was relying upon the British troops to delay the German march on Paris. Although the British Expeditionary Force was sent to Mons

with the utmost speed, although it crossed the Channel with all its equipment with a punctuality which astonished every one, yet the British were only drawn up at Mons twenty-four hours before the Germans were upon them. But for the Belgian resistance, a fact on which the Germans never calculated, the enemy would almost certainly have reached Paris. Had they entered Paris, it is true France would not have given in ; but it is stated on competent authority that the fall of Paris must have prolonged the war by at least two years. This would have meant an enormous increase in the toll of men and money which Europe will in any case have to pay.

The Belgians have fought patriotically for a noble ideal. They do not wish their nation to become subject to another. They wish to live their own lives, under their own laws ; to have their own language and literature and art. They have fought this war for freedom and not for prosperity.

And it is plain that, even if we, the British, had no other obligations or inducements to enter on this Great War, we should have failed as a nation to obey all chivalrous instincts if we had not determined to fight until the Belgians are restored to their country, and the Germans have given some recompense for the awful disasters they have brought upon this unoffending and gallant nation.

CHAPTER IX

WE saw in the last chapter how grievously the Germans had wronged Belgium, and how they broke their pledged word to Europe. On that count alone, Great Britain would have been justified in joining in the Great War. And it was indeed the violation of Belgian neutrality that actually brought her into the conflict ; but there were also other reasons, no less powerful, which would in time have driven us to take a share in the struggle.

Circumstances forced us, bound as we have been for some years by obligations of friendship to France, to give her the assistance of our Navy. This assistance would sooner or later have been necessary, even if our Expeditionary Force had never been landed on the Continent. When Germany declared war upon France, the northern coasts of France were undefended. And why ? Because the French Fleet was guarding both British and French interests in the Mediterranean ; in other words, France was protecting not only her southern shores, but also our route to Egypt and India. It was only because the French had rendered us this service that we had been able to keep in the North Sea a fleet large enough to protect these islands from the danger of a German

invasion. Never again could we have looked our French allies in the face, if we had allowed their northern coasts to be at the mercy of the German Navy. Remembering this, we can easily understand why it was that, when Germany sent an ultimatum to France (July 31), the British Government promptly undertook to defend the French coasts and shipping, if the German Fleet should come into the Channel or the North Sea.

Sir Edward Grey, explaining the policy of the Cabinet in the House of Commons, summed up the situation in these words

‘My own feeling is this, that if a foreign fleet engaged in a war which France had not sought, and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the unprotected coasts of France, we could not stand aside and see the thing going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing. I believe that would be contrary to the feeling of this country.’

He then asked the House of Commons to confirm the promise which he and his colleagues had given to France. The House of Commons had the legal right to say that a promise made without their consent was not binding on Great Britain. But the House felt that the Cabinet had done what was obviously honourable and necessary in giving the assurance. Parliament was absolutely united

in its approval of the course which the Cabinet had taken.

Thus both our duty to Belgium and our duty to France compelled us to join in the war. It is not too much to say also, that this war is a defensive war. There is ample evidence that, if France had been conquered, we ourselves should have been obliged sooner or later to face an attack or even an invasion from Germany. The Germans themselves had said that the attack on Belgium and France was only to be the first step of their advance: that England's turn would come next, and that Germany was to be made a 'World-Power' by the destruction of the British Empire.

The Germans have for long been filled with the ambition of controlling the whole world; for that reason they have also for long been regarding with jealousy the power of the British Empire. 'The Day'—that is, the day on which Germany should have accomplished the invasion of England—has been one of the favourite toasts of their sailors, and their statesmen and their newspapers have talked and written as if this invasion were the paramount duty of the present generation of German-speaking people.

It would be foolish of us to underrate the ability of the German nation. They are clever, industrious, and brave. We ought to recognize that they have done much for the good of all mankind. Many of

us have known ordinary Germans whom we both respected and admired—men and women who were entirely honourable and civilized. But it does not follow that other nations are intended by Providence to be the subjects of the Germans, or that Germany is the only Power which has a mission to fulfil in the world. Each nation, if it makes the best of itself, has some special gifts, some peculiar talents, which are of use not only to itself but also to its neighbours. The world is all the better and the richer because in it there are many types of national character. This is an elementary fact to which the German nation seems blind at the present day. The Germans are overcome with the sense of their own good qualities. Excellent though they may be in many ways, it does not follow in consequence that the Germans have a mission to turn the whole world into German colonies, speaking the German language and governed by German methods. ‘It will be a bad business for the world when the Germans get the upper hand’ is what many Englishmen have said to themselves and to each other; and that is the opinion of most civilized people, other than Germans or Austrians to-day.

A good many Germans now pretend that their country has never cherished these ambitions of world-wide rule. But for many years the whole German nation have been openly discussing their

schemes, 'this historic mission of Prussia', as they call it. Their newspapers have been full of it, they have spoken of it in their Reichstag, they have taught their school-boys and their school-girls that Germany must 'impress herself upon the world'. Equally openly they have said that Great Britain and her colonies would be the chief obstacle in their path; a despicable obstacle all the same, because, as they thought, no help worth having would be given to us by our colonies. Once the power of France was broken down (so they reasoned) they would be free to attack Great Britain. Had they maimed Great Britain they assuredly meant to push on to America. Brazil has always seemed to them a particularly suitable place for a German colony. Having acquired Brazil, which even now has a large German population, they would then have proceeded to try for more.

Let us suppose for a moment, though only for a moment, that the Germans in the end might succeed in conquering us. Their rule certainly would not be a comfortable one. To remind us of this we have before our eyes examples of how they govern subject nationalities. In Poland, in Alsace, and in Schleswig-Holstein, they have tried to force the German language and German ways upon the people. The natives are treated as persons of a lower race; order is maintained by the constant presence of soldiers and by petty

interferences of an exasperating nature in the humdrum affairs of daily life. The German Government does not love liberty; constant vigilance is its watchword. Freedom, as we understand the word in the British Empire, does not exist in Germany. It is our boast that we British, when we are at home, can do what we like and say what we like provided we keep the peace, and do not injure our neighbours by insulting words or violent deeds. But in Germany it is otherwise. The German Government says 'I will keep the peace, and you shall do as I like'.

The nation, who are docile by nature, are kept in awe by the soldiers. Germany is thus ruled by a spirit of militarism. The soldiers are considered a class apart from ordinary citizens; they are treated as if they were above the ordinary laws of the land, and military men are punished according to military law even in times of peace. The bad consequences of this system may be seen from what happened at Zabern in 1913. Zabern is a small town in Alsace, one of the provinces taken from France in 1870. A German garrison was kept in that town, because the people of Alsace have always heartily disliked their conquerors. The story spread that one of the lieutenants of the garrison told the young recruits that, if they stabbed any Alsatian who insulted them, they would not be punished, but rewarded. This news

created much bad feeling, and the people took to jeering at the soldiers as they passed in the streets. In consequence about sixty Alsatians were arrested and imprisoned by the military. The lieutenant himself wounded a lame cobbler whose wife mocked at him. Though complaints of the disgraceful conduct of the soldiers were made in the Reichstag, the Government refused to punish them, and actually commended them for upholding the honour of the German Army.

We may well ask how any Government could act so absurdly and so unjustly. The reason is that the men who govern Germany have been taught in a bad school. They have learned to worship might, and to think that 'might is right'. Instead of working for universal peace, which their own wise men of the past regarded as the highest aim for mankind to pursue, the German people have greedily listened to the arguments of those who taught that war is a good thing in itself. War, say the Germans of to-day, is the proper work for men and heroes; only slaves and cowards love their enemies, and the Sermon on the Mount is out of date. Instead of teaching that a war is one of the greatest evils that can befall a nation, they have taught that the successful statesman is the man who brings about a war and contrives that his country shall profit by the war.

We hold, on the other hand, that no war is

justifiable unless it be waged to defend the weak, or to defend honour and right dealing. To-day we are fighting to uphold a great ideal. We are fighting because it would have been a national shame and dishonour to remain at peace. We are fighting for the liberty of the nations of Europe, that they may work out their own forms of government, whether they be large or small States. Germany is upholding the opposite of this. She wishes all other States to bend their will to hers, because of her exceeding might.

The Germans made many mistakes when they decided to bring about a European war. They had fully made up their minds that in such a case the colonies of Great Britain would either stand aside or take the opportunity of breaking away from the Mother Country. But the great Dominions which make up our Empire—Australia, Canada, Newfoundland, New Zealand, and South Africa—have shown that the cause of the Mother Country is theirs. There was a rebellion, it is true, in South Africa, but this was the work of a handful of deluded men, and was due to the artful plotting of our German enemies. It has now been overcome, and South Africa has taken the burden of its defence upon its own shoulders. The support of the colonies has in every case been generous. Australia, Canada, Newfoundland, and New Zealand have placed their naval resources at the disposal

of the Home Government; they have sent contingents of men to fight for us upon the Continent; they have given us money and supplies. Other colonies, which are smaller and less wealthy, have sent us men, gifts of money, and food-stuffs. It has been shown that our Empire is bound together by something more than vague sentiment.

India, contrary to German expectations, has also proved entirely loyal to Great Britain. Instead of being thrown into a state of open rebellion at the first signs of trouble for the Mother Country, India has responded to our need with the same magnificent generosity and loyalty as the Dominions. In that vast peninsula, so remote from Great Britain, all classes and creeds have joined in a single aim: that aim is to remain part of the British Empire, and to crush this German creed of militarism.

This European War, then, instead of causing a revolt in our Empire, has knit its peoples together more closely than ever before. Our Empire shelters people of many races, many faiths, many interests; but if, as it has been well said, some of the strongest links which bind a nation are 'common memories of the past and common hopes for the future' Germany has forged links as strong as iron for the British Empire, in this Great War.

Before the war we had many common traditions and aspirations. But to these Germany has added

a memory and created a hope. The memory will be of the good comradeship between the sons of Britain and the sons of her colonies in this Great War, this crusade for the liberty of nations. The hope will be that this gallant championship of small nations and of sworn treaties may lead to an age when men expect, as a matter of course, that the same standards of fairness and truth must be respected between nations and communities as nowadays we expect to find between two respectable men, who are bargaining one with another. When this standard of public honesty is expected and practised, maybe the time will be at hand when physical force will no longer be used to solve problems of world government.

CHAPTER X

It is not easy to prophesy what may be the results for Europe, when at last this Great War comes to an end. Points of political moment, such as the allotment of territories, the fixing of boundaries, the question of indemnities for the past and guarantees for the future, will in the natural course of things be settled at a European Congress, just as, after the Napoleonic wars, such matters were settled at the Congress of Vienna. A famous Belgian writer has suggested Liège as an interesting and appropriate place at which the Congress might meet. Here the Germans made their first attack on Belgian freedom and the law of nations. It would be only fitting that here they should render an account for the miseries which they have inflicted upon Belgium. Compensation for Belgium will be the first thing demanded from Germany by the Allies. All her lost territories must be restored to Belgium, with a just indemnity for the ruin of her cities and the losses of her inhabitants; moreover, some guarantees must be given to ensure the respect of international law in the future, and consequently the security of the smaller States of Europe.

On these points only has our Government made

any pronouncement. Sir Edward Grey said recently (March 22, 1915):

‘In due time the terms of peace will be put forward by our Allies in concert with us—in accordance with the alliance that exists between us—and published to the world. One essential condition must be the restoration to Belgium of her independence, national life, and free possession of her territory, and reparation to her as far as reparation is possible for the cruel wrong done to her. That is part of the great issue for which we, with our Allies, are contending, and the great part of the issue is this: We wish the nations of Europe to be free to live their independent lives, working out their own form of government for themselves, and their own national development, whether they be great nations or small States, in full liberty. This is our ideal. The German ideal—we have it poured out by German professors and publicists since the war began—is that of the Germans as a superior people, to whom all things are lawful in the securing of their own power, against whom resistance of any sort is unlawful—a people establishing a domination over the nations of the Continent, imposing a peace which is not to be liberty for every nation, but subservience to Germany. I would rather perish or leave the Continent altogether than live in it under such conditions.’

These, then, are the aims for which we are fighting—the restoration of Belgium, and respect for

international law. Until these aims are achieved, the Allies will not lay down their arms, and then, and not until then, will the European Congress set its seal upon the terms of peace.

These are political results. But there are others, which will be felt acutely by every man and woman of the nations at war. At sea and on the battlefields of Europe many of our strongest, ablest, and youngest men have fallen. People of every class will mourn for them ; and every nation will be the poorer for their loss. For in all professions and occupations there will be many gaps in the ranks of the workers. Those who remain will have to beware lest standards of work and learning which have been left in their care are lowered ; lest the work which ought to be done is left undone because of sloth or incapacity ; lest the children of to-day shall be content with a lower standard of achievement than that which their fathers accomplished. Those who are left will have to work harder with their hands and with their brains ; they will have to spend less and save more. Each one of us will need to do more than one man's work, if Great Britain and Europe are ever to repair the loss and the waste that this war has produced.

Perhaps, too, when the excitement of the war is over, men will begin to realize the pinch of the heavy taxation which will inevitably cripple the

activities of the nations of Europe for many years. At this there will be probably much grumbling by ignorant people. And there will be cause for all to be disheartened. In the future, money will have to be stinted on many a project of public improvement. There will be less to spend on schools and universities, and education in general. There will be less money for our hospitals, less money for our charities, less money for scientific research. The generation of boys and girls who are growing up will have to make a great effort in their day to remedy these things. It will need great determination to keep up the general standard of social improvement, to make the best of things, and indeed to prevent our national life going backward instead of advancing. The losses entailed by the war may easily provide a dangerous excuse for not performing public duties.

On the Continent, in the countries which have suffered from invasion, the work of rebuilding and reconstructing ruined towns and villages will have to be undertaken. New towns and new villages will grow up. Much that was old and beautiful will have been swept away. Unoffending people who have lost all that they possessed will have to be replaced in their former positions, under the new conditions. Many people will, no doubt, leave this old Continent of Europe, and seek new homes in the colonies over the seas. In any case, after

the war there will be a large number of men who will not care to return to the dull routine of city life, and who will seek more adventurous occupation elsewhere, and the question of finding work for all after the war is sure to be difficult.

But what of the effect of the war upon ourselves? If we hold that war itself is an evil, we cannot pretend to believe that the effects of war are on the whole good. People are very fond of saying 'That will be very different after the war: people will be changed then!' But war works no miracles; our nation will be made up of the same kind of men, women, and children as before the war, and alas! many of the best men will have been lost. There will still be the same problems of sin, and dirt, and ignorance, and sickness to be faced; and there will be less money to supply remedies. We ourselves may also have become less sensitive and therefore less sympathetic to the troubles of others, having learnt to glory in the misfortunes of our enemies; we may have become more intolerant, and less patient to find out the truth of things. This is very sad, but it is also very true. Only in one way, and that a glorious way, shall we be the richer. We shall have in our history, as a possession for all time, the records of the unselfishness and bravery of those who went out to die, or who did their duty at home ungrudgingly for the honour of their nation, and for the

good of mankind. We shall have examples of self-sacrifice which ought to stir us ourselves to more generous efforts in the future. The nation will remember that they are the people, or the children of the people, for whom those men went out to fight ; that it is our liberties for which they gave their lives. Surely as we read the story of this war, we shall ask ourselves the question :

Here and there did England help me
How can I help England ?

Only let us remember that the seeds of these virtues we so greatly admire were sown in days of peace ; that war has not created them ; but it has opened our eyes, perhaps grown blind with prosperity, to the fact that our men possessed them.

One practical way in which all can help our country, is by trying in the future to understand and learn more about the history and politics of nations other than our own. On the whole, we as a people have taken little interest in foreign policy. This war ought to make us feel that, as we are part of the great family of nations in Europe, we cannot stand aside from, or afford to allow ourselves to remain in ignorance of, the histories and policies of other nations. The German nation has given us a frightful warning as to the dangers of ignorance. Foreign policy is a question which concerns everybody, just as much as social

legislation. There is no doubt that the German nation has allowed itself to be misled by a comparatively small body of Prussian militarists. It is blinded by prejudice and ignorant of the real issues at stake in this war. Let us hope that we Britons have learnt once and for all that a good patriot must also be a good European; and that it is to history that we must look for the sort of instruction without which it will be impossible to fill that part.

It is possible that for many generations these days will be spoken of as the greatest that the world has ever known. Now we hear of gallantry which will compare with the bravest deeds of olden days; and we hear of sorrows which are as deep as any the world has known. In after days we shall think of these years in two ways: we shall think of the honour, we shall think of the sorrow.

There are two well-known poems which describe these feelings of remembrance. One tells of the glow of pride which the Romans felt, as in after years they told their children of how Horatius kept the bridge and defended Rome against fearful odds, until his name became a household word. It runs thus:

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;

When young and old in circle
 Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
 And the lads are shaping bows;
When the goodman mends his armour,
 And trims his helmet's plume;
When the good wife's shuttle merrily
 Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
 Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
 In the brave days of old.

The other verses tell simply of the sorrow of remembrance :

We sat and talked until the night,
 Descending, filled the little room :
Our faces faded from the sight,
 Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spoke of many a vanished scene,
 Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been,
 And who was changed, and who was dead.

We as a Nation shall feel the honour of the War, and we shall feel the sorrow more. But in spite of the heavy price, 'is there any one who thinks it possible now that we could have sat still and looked on without eternal disgrace?' These are the words of Sir Edward Grey, the friend of peace—and to them there is only one possible answer. And, moreover, if the war has taught us that it

is possible to lay aside private quarrels for the public good, if it has taught us to be proud of our nation at unity with itself, if it has shown us that our men have the stuff of heroes in them when they are properly clothed and properly fed, the sacrifice of those men who have died, and the sacrifice of those who have given them up, will not have been in vain ; and bad though many of the results of the war must inevitably be, it will have taught us what patriotism really is—and what possibilities lie in our nation when social conditions shall be improved.

GLOSSARY

abdicate, to divest oneself of an office.

absentee, one who systematically stays away from his country, or home.

aggression, an unprovoked attack.

aide-de-camp, an officer who assists a general in his military duties, conveying his orders, and procuring him intelligence.

alliance, union for a common object.

appendage, an addition to territory, or property.

aspirations, steadfast desire.

assurance, a positive declaration intended to give confidence.

autocrat, one who rules with undisputed sway.

campaign, the operations of an army 'in the field'.

capitulate, to make terms of surrender.

coalition, an alliance for combined action.

community, life in association with others; body of individuals.

compact, a mutual agreement.

compensation, remuneration, amends.

compromise, mutual promise.

confederation, a league, an alliance.

convention, an assembly or gathering of persons for some common object

decree, an ordinance, or law.

delegate, a person sent to act on behalf of others.

despotism, arbitrary government.

diplomacy, the management of negotiations.

dual, composed of two parts.

Entente, agreement.

Expeditionary Force, that part of the British Army kept ready for employment at any moment.

frontier, the boundary or border of a State.

harangue, a speech, an oration.

indemnity, compensation for loss.

international, common to two or more nations.

localize, to make local, to limit to a place.

mediaeval, belonging to the Middle Ages.

mobilization, massing of troops for active service.

negotiations, settling by conference.

neutral, taking no part in a contest.

Note, a diplomatic communication.

orthodox, conforming to what is generally received as the right faith.

overture, a proposal, an offer.

penalty, punishment.

proclamation, declaration.

protégé, one under the care of another.

publicist, a writer on the laws of nations ; or a writer on current public topics.

Reichstag, Parliament (German).

suffrage, vote.

tariff, a list of customs, duties.

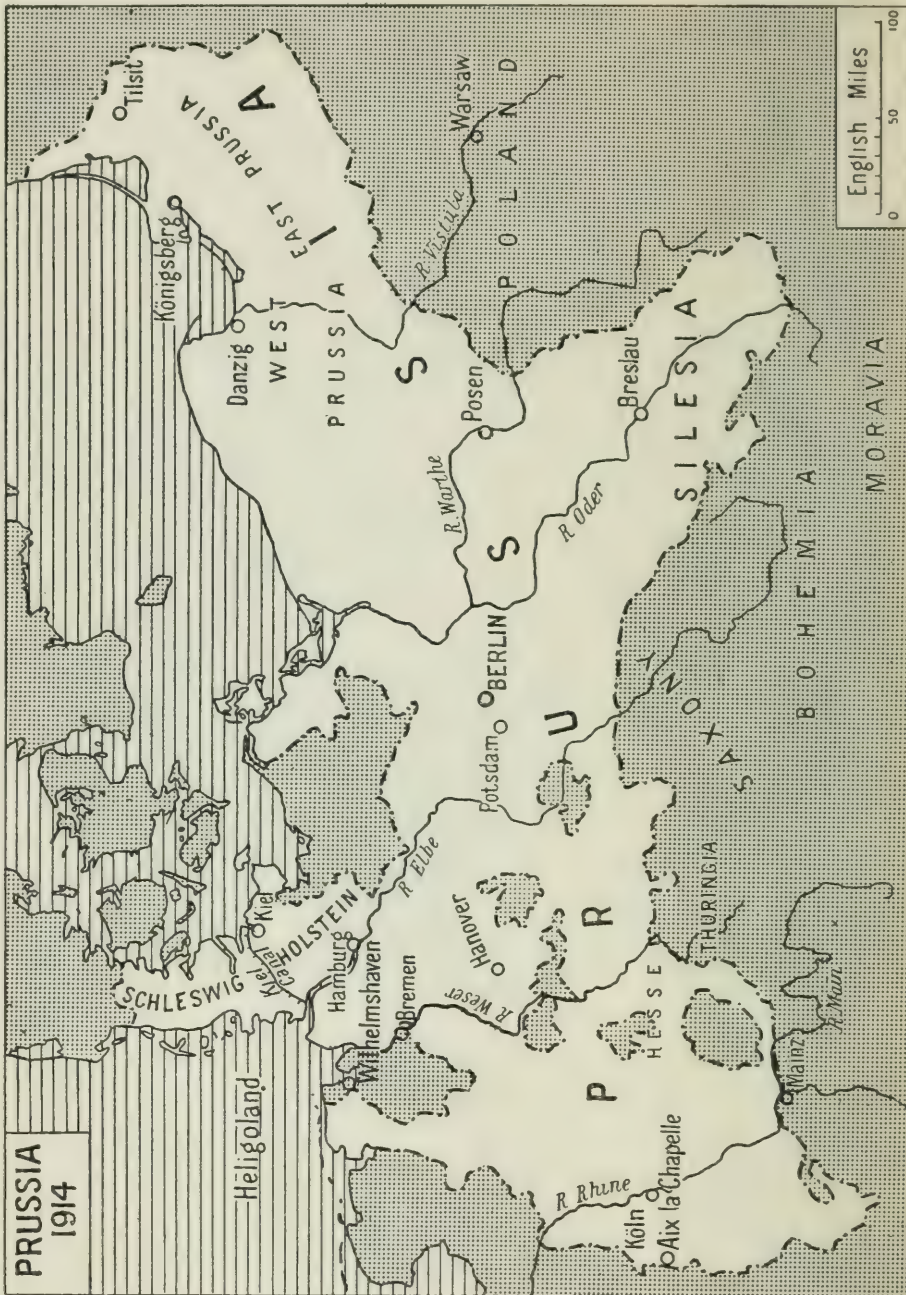
tributary, paying taxes.

ultimatum, the last offer, final conditions offered.

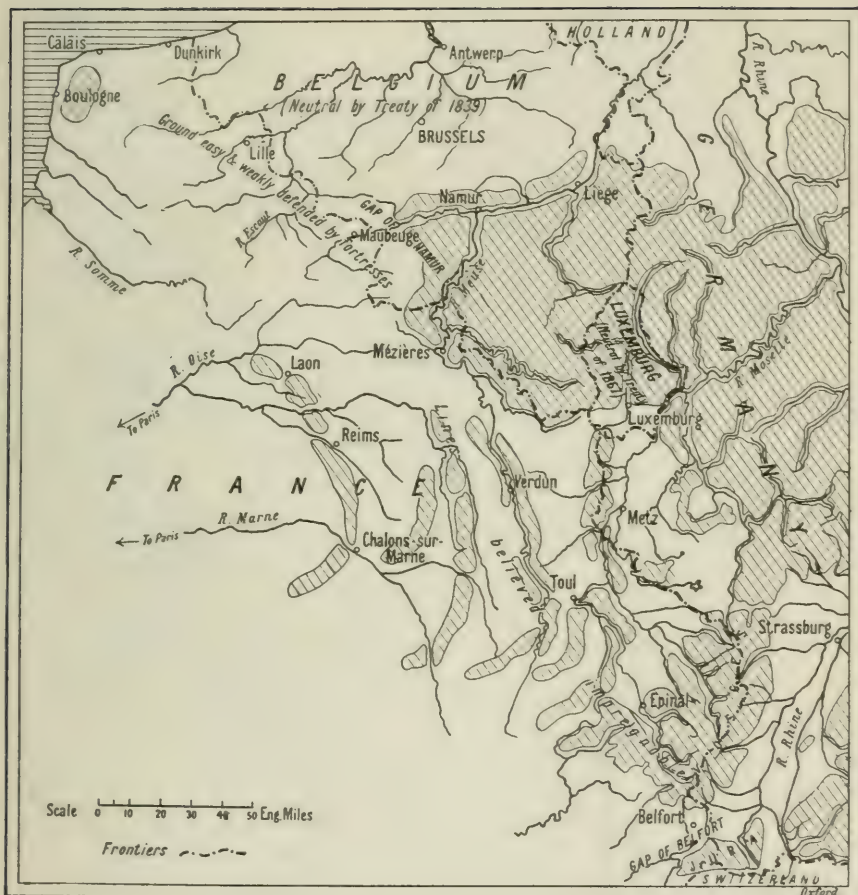
MAPS



PRUSSIA 1914

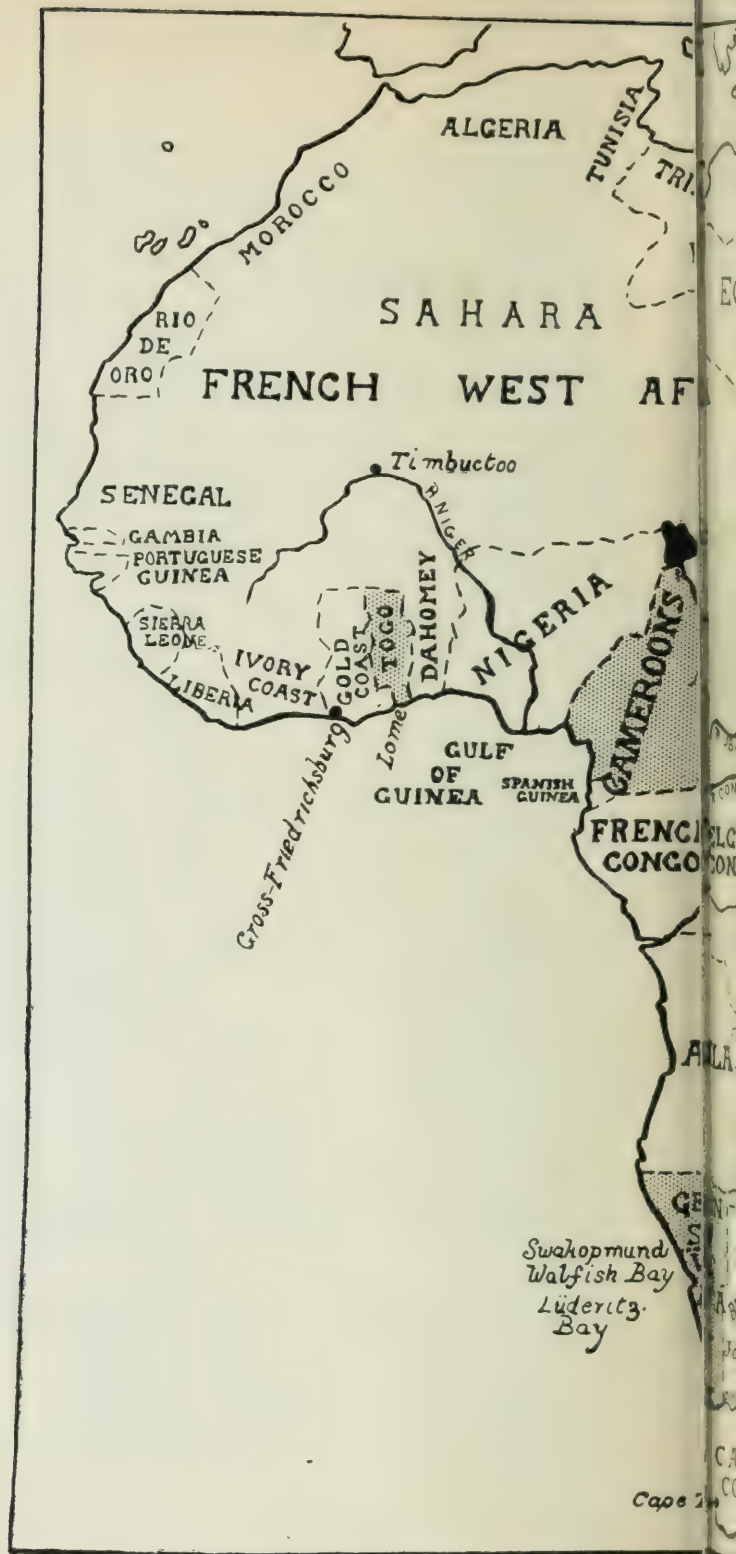


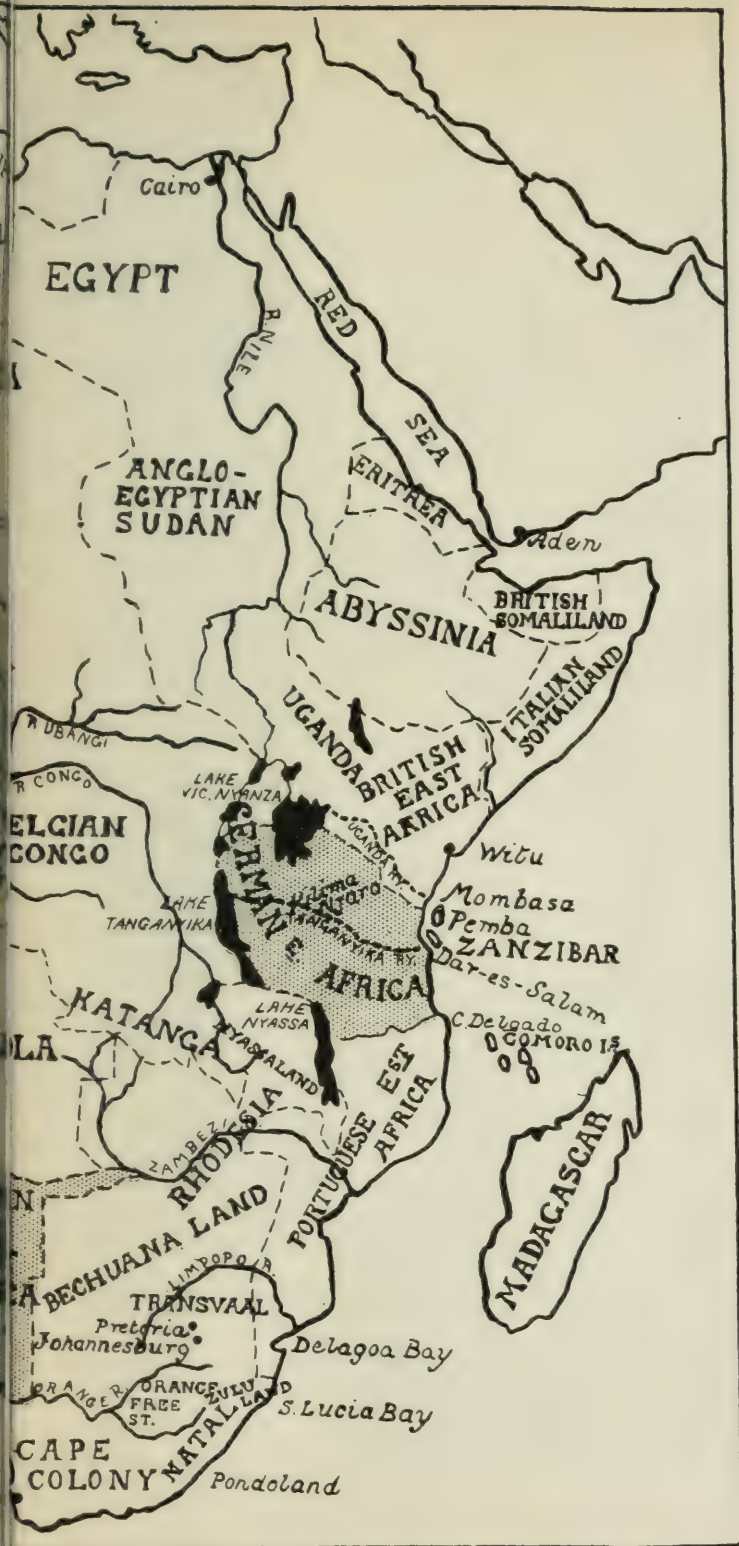
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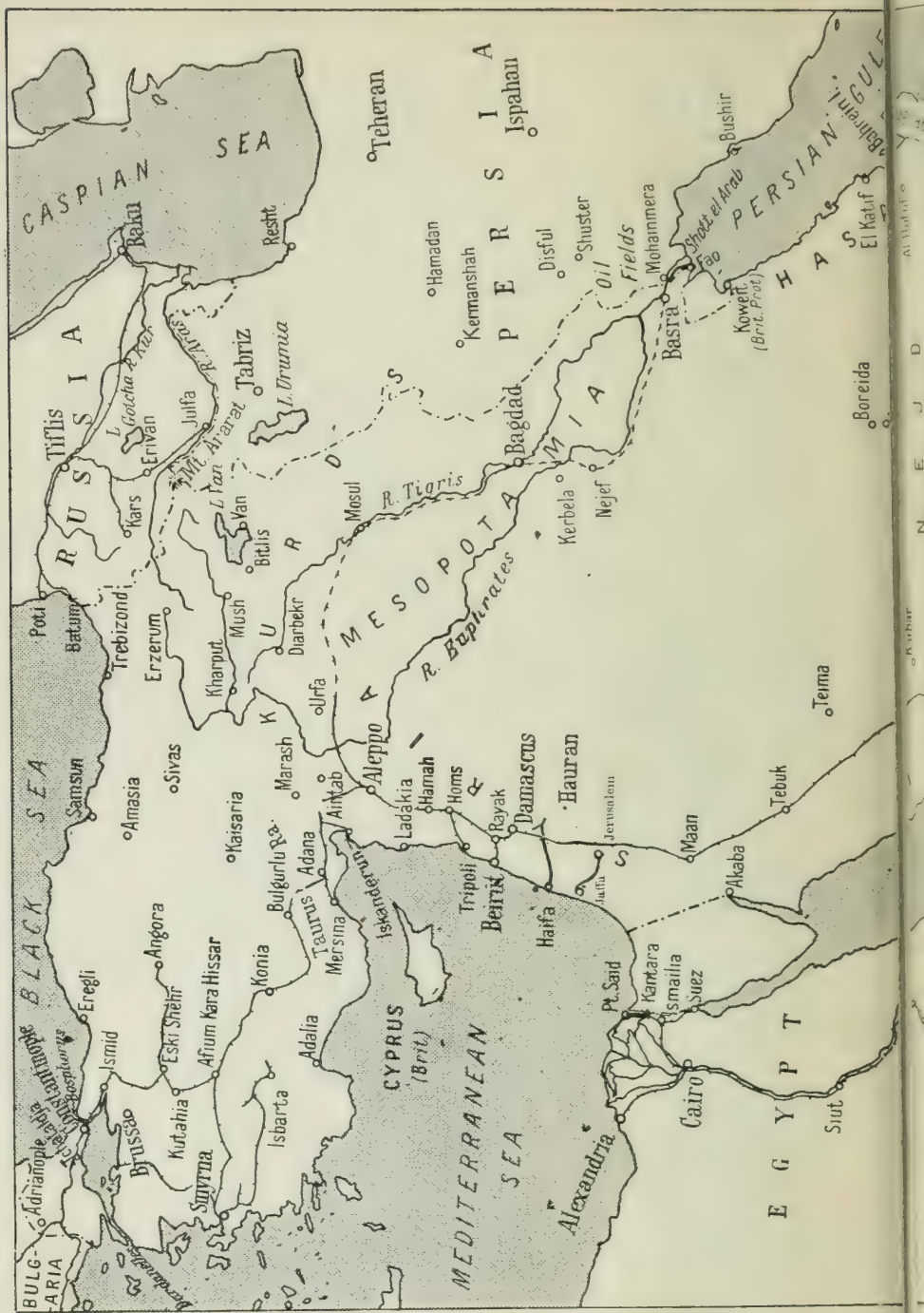


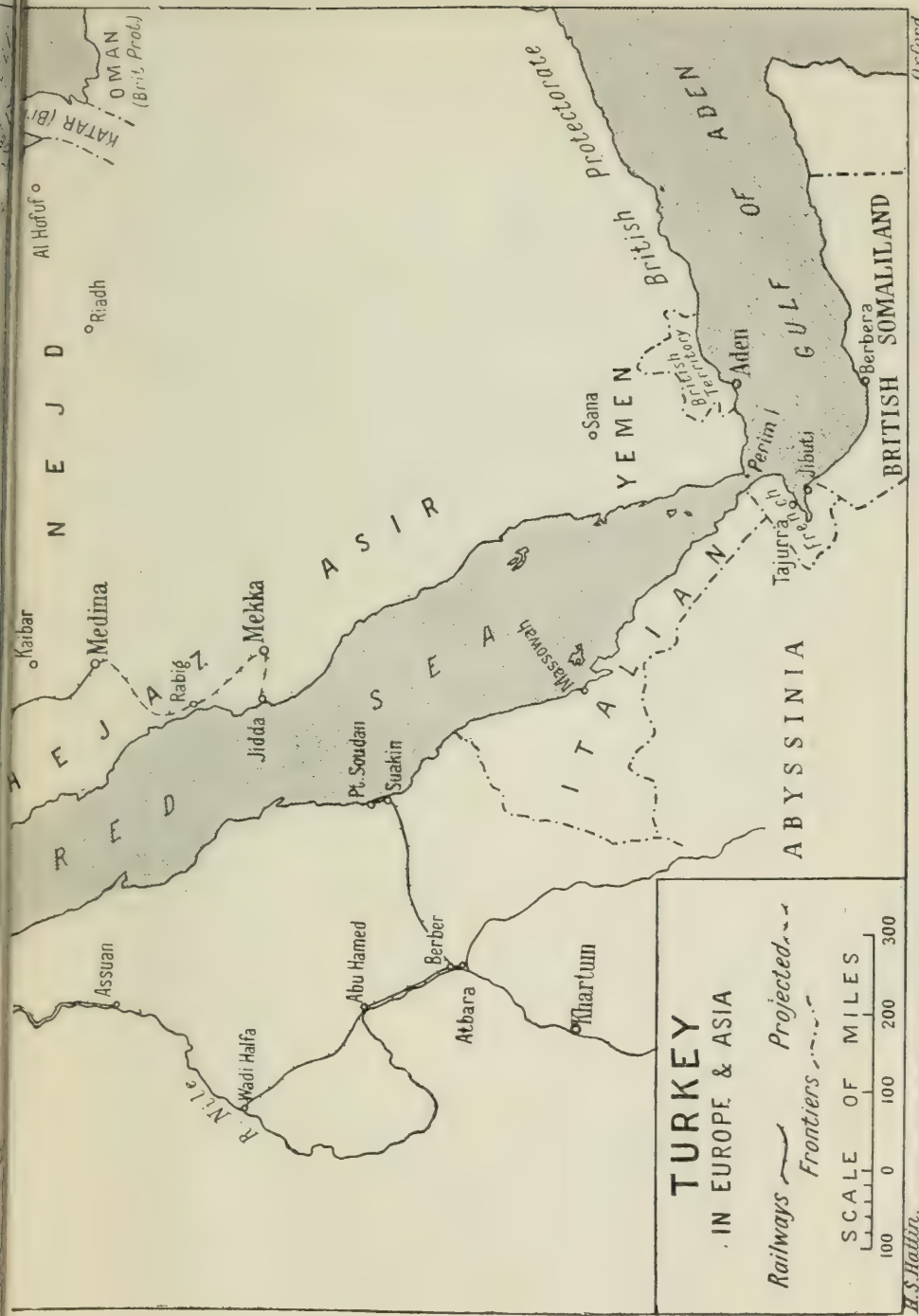
THE FRONTIERS OF FRANCE, BELGIUM, AND LUXEMBURG

The shaded portions represent higher ground



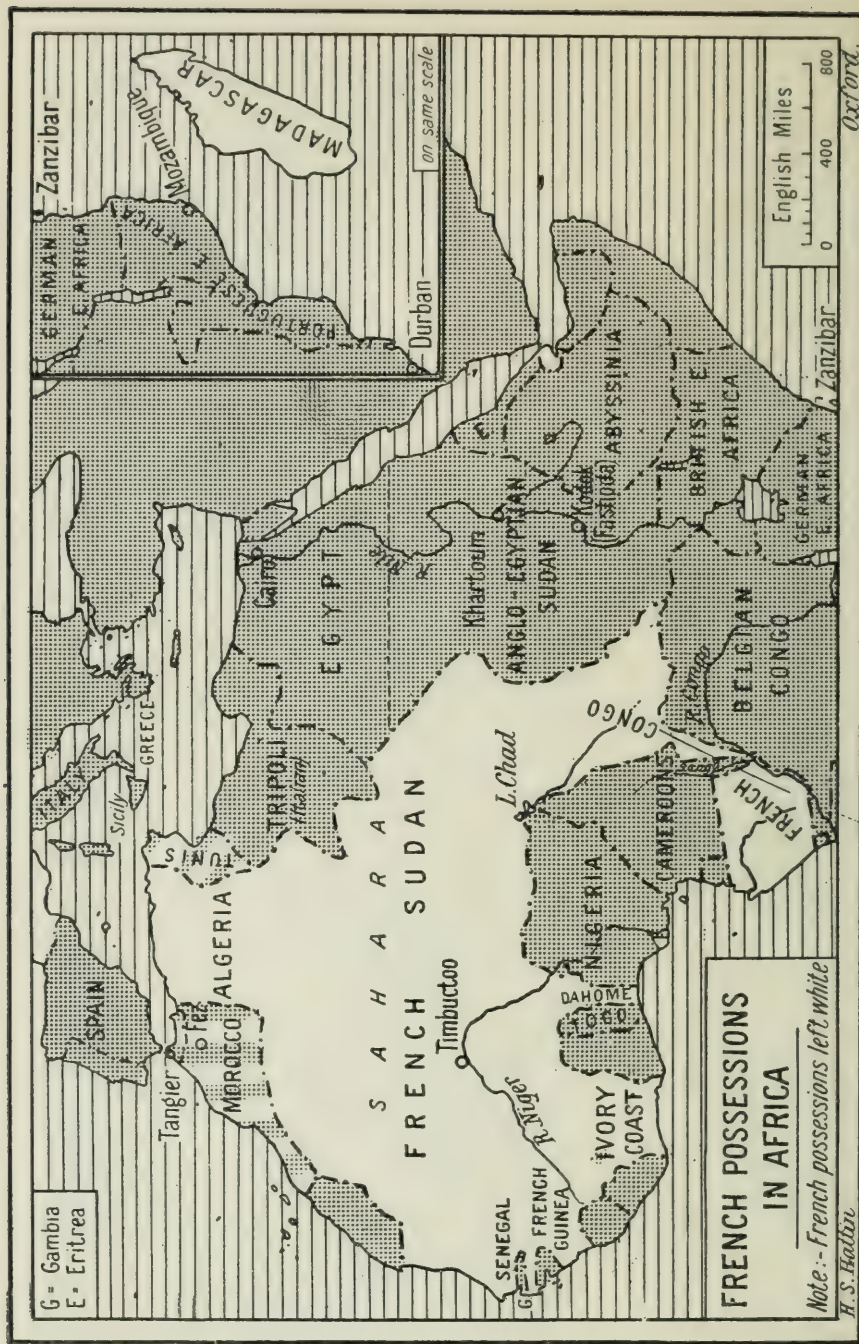






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